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NEW STATESMAN

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After the Ball Was Over

The Commonwealth is one of the least obnoxious organisations in the world. Those in Britain who believe it should be wound up without further ado are generally those to whom the memory of the Empire is still dear. A Commonwealth which functioned as an old boys' reunion, while preserving the imperial hierarchy, would be one thing. But the modern Commonwealth, in which Britain is hardly even *primus inter pares*, is bound to arouse the fury of the blimps. To the old codgers of the Right, the idea that Archbishop Makarios is in Britain – and not even behind bars! – must be distressing. And all those black faces! Congratulations are due to the Right on the way they have managed to remain so civil during the past week, in the face of such provocation.

To the young codgers, in particular, the notion that the richer countries have some responsibility to the poorer ones, that something should be done about the vast inequalities in the world, is mere gibberish. Inequality is precisely what they are interested in. They measure their success by the amount they outstrip their neighbours, and they believe that the best occupation for the poor is to admire the rich – from a distance. The infantile Right, whose views on world economy have a positively 18th-century optimism, seem to think it logical that the poor will get richer merely by inhabiting the same globe as the rich. We wish we could share their optimism.

But if we cannot do so, the Right should not get too worried, for they have an able and energetic spokesman in Mr Denis Healey, whose speech to the Commonwealth heads of government has been one of the major disappointments of this year's conference. Translated from the dead language of the Treasury into plain speech, what Mr Healey said was as follows. Things are going badly in the industrial countries, and, although we hope against hope that they will improve, they won't improve so fast that it's going to be of much use to you developing countries. You should be glad that we are being as generous as we are. For instance, it was only on the last round of public expenditure cuts that Britain decided to reduce its planned programme for overseas aid. Only on the last round! How restrained we have been. What's more, it had better be made clear that, if anything nasty happens to us, the consequences are going to be even nastier for you. So, although we'll do a certain amount of tinkering around in order to keep you sweet, you aren't to expect any radical change in our attitude. *We've* got no real policy except to wait around for the American economy to recover. *You've* got no choice but to wait around for our economies to recover. Nevertheless we like you very much. Now please go and take a long walk off a short cliff. Yours, Denis.

After that kind of speech, we sincerely hope that the weekend in Gleneagles was fun, and that the high-speed train and the Jubilee fireworks have given the various heads of government some pleasant memories – perhaps even a few stories to dine out on when they get home. Certainly a Commonwealth Conference whose main achievement has been to ensure that the Commonwealth Games will after all take place next year will merit very little space in the history books. Nevertheless, whether they do or do not achieve very much, these occasions are popular with their participants. Their pointlessness derives from the intransigence of the industrial countries in the face of the extremely uneven development which continues to blemish the world economy.

For uneven development, as Tom Nairn reminds us in a book published this week, is a polite expression for war. The uneven development of Southern Africa has already been expressed through the force of arms, and recent events have given no cause for optimism as to the outcome. This is the last area of British imperial foreign policy, and therefore the first area of interest to the Commonwealth leaders. Yet the last week has shown that there is even less support in Africa for British policy than had previously been claimed. If there is a point to the Commonwealth, it ought surely to be that we listen to the warnings, and act on them, before it is too late.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Stuck for a Title

Here we are again then, back at work in Westminster, and on the second day back what do we see? The Prime Minister allowing a free vote on direct elections, his deputy admitting defeat over devolution, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in trouble over £450m.-worth of tax cuts, and MPs confidently predicting an autumn election. No wonder we're stuck for a title. 'The End is Nigh', perhaps? 'The Westminster Death-Rattle'? 'Mr Callaghan Kicks the Bucket'? Or something more in the *Guardian* line of business – 'Last Tango in t' Palace', or 'The Cabinet of Dr Callighani'? No, no. Let us be serious for once, and ask, 'Has Jim blown his big end?' Certainly the machine has been making ominous knocking noises for some time, and that little red light on the dashbord has been winking on and off periodically. How much longer can we expect the vehicle to last?

First of all, it has to be pointed out that the situation outside Westminster is not as bad as all that. The recent balance of payments figures, although unlikely to be repeated quite so dramatically, are at least a morale boost. Sterling is – Sterling! you remember those days, when we all sat around the bedside wondering whether to deliver the final unction. Well, sterling is at least now sitting up in bed and eating a little nourishing broth. I find it difficult to understand why nothing is being done now to run down the sterling balances, while the going is good. But, patience. As for Phase Three, it may or may not come off. But even if it does not come off it seems to me that there are plenty of ways in which the Government and the TUC could *pretend* that it has. At all events, whatever the long-term prospects for the economy, in the short term there is a certain amount of room for manoeuvre. And Mr Healey's working on a mini-budget, his fiftieth, I seem to recall, since he became Chancellor.

So does the fact that the economy is not absolutely on the ropes mean that Callaghan would be more likely to have an election, or less likely? Answer: less likely. Remember, we're supposed to be on the way to Eldorado of fossil fuel. Why should we give up, just because Jeff Rooker, winner of a specially created award for the Most Interesting Nostrils in Westminster, has had a little adventure in the committee stage of the Finance Bill? Or because we have failed to give Scotland and Wales something that very few Labour politicians are particularly keen on? Or because the public will now know, what the public has always been in a position to know, namely that there is a cabinet split over the EEC? The spectacle of the Government reduced to frantic inactivity over the next two months will not be particularly edifying. But it may be interesting for those who delight in reading the future in the entrails of the present.

They should watch, in particular, Dr David Owen, who now faces his greatest test as a domestic – rather than *Jeux-sans-frontières*-style – politician. For it is high time that he began to pull his weight in the Labour Party's internecine strife over direct elections. Success in this field could win him precedence over Shirley Williams as leader of the Right. Failure could mean that he is seen as little more than a pretty face. It was, I suppose, inevitable that the really extraordinarily good press he received after his appointment should lead to a period of relapse. The Jay affair was, of course, the main reason for Owen's temporary fall from grace, although it did not go unnoticed that the trip to Rhodesia, so well written-up at the time, produced a plan (for Anglo-American cooperation) which was scuppered a couple of days after Owen's return to England. The reason for the Jay appointment seems to me to be that Owen was so impressed by the reception his *own* appointment got, that he thought he might be able to repeat the effect. It turns out, however, to have reversed the original gains.

Yet the fact was that for a while the boy Owen got a marvellous write-up. All kinds of things were claimed in his favour, including his belief in the effectiveness of electro-convulsive shock therapy. He had once said at a dinner party that if Debbie suffered from post-natal depression, he would simply 'plug her into the mains'. (This is the most sinister story I have heard about any Labour politician. If he would do that to his wife, what would he do to *us*, for crying out loud?) His various tastes were lovingly recorded, including his predilection for long and frequent baths as a means of relaxation. His habit of combing his hair in public was criticised, and admired. The Russians called him an old-fashioned hawk. His neighbours in Limehouse called him a toff. Everything was hunky-dory. If things are now only hunky, he is still well ahead of his former peers. Roy Hattersley, for instance – we have no conception of *his* bathing habits (although I hasten to say that we have no reason to complain about them). We are vaguely aware of a certain weight problem, that's all. In comparison with Owen, Hatters is a dark horse indeed.

The next paragraph should be skipped by all those who dislike idle, irrelevant and malicious gossip about public figures who have no right of reply.

A servant of the Palace of Westminster was discussing Owen's appointment. 'Mind you,' he said, 'I'm not sure I'd want him as *my* doctor.' 'Oh really,' I said, 'you interest me strangely. Why not?' Well, it seems that some time ago a chap fell downstairs in the Palace, gave himself a nasty shock and was bleeding from the ear. Bleeding from the ear can mean concussion, so a doctor was called for. Two arrived simultaneously, David Owen and Shirley Summerskill. 'Well,' said my informant, 'they spent so long arguing over which of them should treat the man, that in the end I had to overrule them and call an ambulance.'

Pshaw! Where were we? Ah yes, the question – who leads the Right? The person who does so has to be the one who will meet Benn in the next leadership contest, yes? So it would be worth such a person's while to establish him or herself now as a doughty warrior for truth and justice and the honouring of commitments. In this context it is significant that Owen was quick to speak up, in his constituency, against Benn's revival of the anti-EEC campaign. No one could accuse Owen of being a bad European. Indeed, so good a European is he, he has even proposed a scheme for throwing countries out of Europe if they fail to maintain democratic procedures. Oh yes, he's a good European all right. But in his present position he ought, ought he not? to be even a little more than a good European. He ought to be ardent. He ought to be appalled at the way the cabinet has behaved, he ought to be pulling rank, creating a stink. If David Owen starts doing this, we shall know what to think.

On the question of how the next leader of the Labour Party is chosen, it is widely assumed that Benn is the one politician who stands to gain from a more democratic procedure. But things are not as simple as that. For a start, if conference adopted a democratic procedure of a kind which was likely to push Benn to power, we may be fairly sure that the PLP would say: Nuts to that, you may have your Labour Party leader, but the Parliamentary Labour Party, and therefore any future Government, will be led by a man whom *we* choose. There would then be, and not for the first time, two Labour leaders. If, on the other hand, a system could be devised in which the dice was loaded against Benn, the PLP might fall for it. For instance, if there was some kind of flashy convention (televised, of course, American-style) which might be sold as a good publicity gimmick, and a way of revitalising the party. In that case, of course, a flashy, American-style politician like David Owen might even be tempted to run. We may be certain, however, that if any changes are made in the method of selection of leader, they will be made with an eye to the immediate outcome, and not out of abstract notions of democracy. Even perfervid democrats like Owen know which side their bread is buttered.

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Paul Johnson

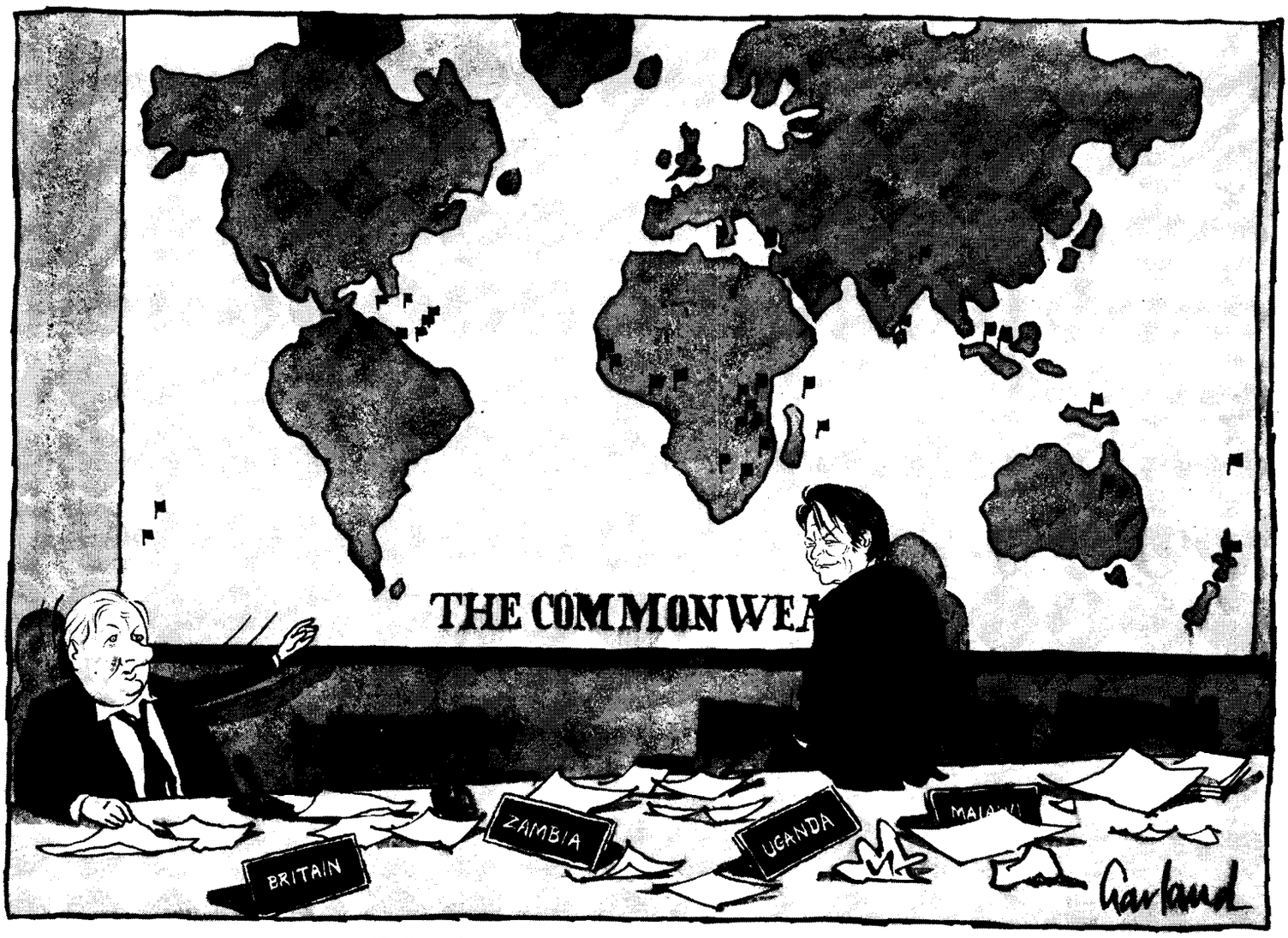
Hands Off the Foreign Office!

'I don't care a pig's nipple what you think.' With these immortal words addressed to the head of the Foreign Office, Herbert Morrison, then Foreign Secretary, expressed his fury at the fact that Burgess and Maclean, the FO's tipsy pair of defectors, had been allowed to fly the coop. At the time, the FO came in for general censure (some of it justified) for the way they had handled the affair. But as a matter of fact the subsequent cover-up, the campaign which, unwittingly, protected Mrs Maclean, Philby and the 'Fourth Man', was the work of highly-connected and well-meaning busybodies outside the FO, such as Lady Violet Bonham Carter; it was their activities on this occasion which led Henry Fairlie to coin the phrase 'the Establishment'. When, and if, the full facts are ever known, I suspect the FO will emerge looking less silly, and the Russians more gullible, than anyone suspects at present.

But hunting the FO is never out of season; especially when Labour is in power. There is a campaign on at present, launched by teeny-bopper Fabian ladies inside the Government's Doublethink Tank. The idea is to dissolve the separate identity of the diplomatic service to allow its penetration by hoards of economic 'experts' from other departments – and, no doubt, to transform ambassadorships wholesale into Quangos. Trained diplomats, given the habits of governments, especially Labour ones, would be gradually replaced by retired trade union officials and ambitious social science professors. Thus our foreign service would be 'democratised' and 'modernised', and Britain would soon be a top nation again.

This campaign is based upon a whole series of interlocking misapprehensions. Britain's low rating in the world is not in any way due to the incompetence of the foreign service but to the cumulative errors of political leaders of both parties, and our wretchedly poor economic performance. What the foreign service has done is to conduct a very effective rearguard action, to conceal the degree of our folly, and minimise the damage. Some years ago, a former NS editor, John Freeman, who served as High Commissioner in Delhi and Ambassador in Washington, urged me to write an article defending the general efficiency of the service, which he rightly claimed was greatly underrated. I regret that I did not do so then, but I am doing it now.

In the past, our diplomats gave the impression, sometimes deliberately, that they had an easy time of it: reading, say, Lord Frederick Hamilton's *The Vanished World of Yesterday* makes it seem like parties all the way. But Lord Frederick was selling his book, not the service. When Sir Francis Walsingham first created a professional diplomatic and espionage service in the 1570s and 1580s, during the long run-up to the great war with Hapsburg Spain, he made his men work their guts out, often for little reward. This tradition has never been entirely effaced, so that, behind the façade of elegant living, there has always been a harsh reality of sleepless nights spent deciphering, cancelled weekends and holidays, early risings and late evenings. Palmerston treated the FO staff so harshly, and worked them so hard, that when in 1841 he finally lost his job, they clubbed together to buy masses of candles to have the FO illuminated. Harold Nicolson's very detailed studies of British diplomacy in the first decades of this century do not give the impression of an idle life. The Marquess of Curzon was quite capable of personally dragging a first secretary out of bed at four in the morning and setting him to work with a code-book – or, for that matter, ordering



'Roll up that map; it will not be wanted these two years!'

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a brush and pan and, on his hands and knees, dusting down the main staircase of the Paris embassy himself, because he thought it looked scruffy.

Travelling round the world, and visiting innumerable British embassies, I have rarely found signs of underwork. Here is another confusion of ideas. The foreign service is overstaffed, in the sense that it is too large for our true needs; but it is not overmanned – I use the word in the technical sense – because the Government gives it so many things to do. For instance, every embassy receives a constant stream of official or quasi-official visitors from Britain: Ministers, MPs, trade union bosses (the most exigent, and ungrateful), members of Royal Commissions, Select Committees and other similar bodies. These people demand carefully-composed programmes of appointments (as well as entertainment), and the embassy staff have to provide them. When the Royal Commission on the Press visited the United States, we went through an immensely detailed and complex programme of visits and meetings, which must have involved officials in weeks of work. I hope it was worthwhile. Much of the business in which governments involve embassies is not.

The present attack on the FO is all the more dangerous because of personal factors. We all now know Jim Callaghan made a huge error of judgment in appointing his son-in-law to Washington. This might have been forgiven. But stabbing our ambassador, Sir Peter Ramsbotham, in the back was a different matter. I have not been able to establish whether Callaghan himself was guilty. The stab in the back was particularly nasty because Sir Peter is a well-above-average ambassador (and the average is high). I was staggered, when I saw him in Washington last autumn, thinking I had never met him before, that he not only recalled an occasion 20 years ago, but remembered exacty what I had said to him (it sounded pretty silly, too). This effortless Pelmanism, which requires training and application, is the kind of professional equipment which our senior foreign service officials take for granted. Sir Peter is much respected and liked in Washington; and, even if Callaghan is innocent, the fact remains that he, and David Owen, deliberately shunted a successful ambassador into a backwater in order to make way for Mr Jay. That is not the kind of action which produces a self-confident and successful foreign service.

Dr Owen is an even more important personal factor. One of the characteristics of the younger right-wing Labour leaders (Shirley Williams always excepted) is their sheer vanity. They sincerely believe that they are the divinely appointed custodians of the nation's political conscience. Recently I heard one of them, Bill Rodgers, stun a lunch party into comatose silence by a detailed account of his moral and political reasons for buying a foreign car. Owen is cast in the same mode, and with an unhealthy itch for the limelight. He can pull his newly-acquired weight, too. Not long ago, at one of our embassies, feeling he wanted a sandwich at one in the morning, he had a senior embassy official hauled out of bed to get it. This was not quite – how I shall say? – the Curzon Touch.

With Owen around, and Jim in an ugly mood, the foreign service feel apprehensive about what will happen to them. I don't think they need worry too much. The teeny-boppers have already been told to calm down. The report, now anaesthetised, will probably be pigeonholded, even if published. Most foreign service officials already agreed that the service is too big and, provided the Government will agree not to load it with quite so much unnecessary work, the process of cutting it down to size should not be too difficult. Indeed, it can probably best be left to Sir Michael Palliser and his senior officials. There is more going for the foreign service than perhaps its members realise. The national mood is, at present, fervently against further change. The Common Market, local government 'reform', decimalisation, switching from Fahrenheit to Centigrade – and so much else – have aroused growing resistance to those who want to impose change-for-its-own-sake. The foreign service is part of our heritage too, and as it is also, broadly speaking, a very efficient one, my advice to Tammany Jim and Doctor Kildare is: 'Hands off!'

David Tonge

Tough in Turkey

Most of the ingredients of the classical Latin-American scenario were present. There were vigilante squads murdering Leftist opponents. There were fatal riots blamed on the Left but probably provoked by the Right – or so a prosecutor's report on the 34 deaths in the Istanbul May-Day meeting indicates. There were bullet and stone attacks on the one opposition leader with a populist programme who had a chance of threatening the conservative status quo. With the families of the other main politicians shown to be venal it was a tempting time to prepare an army intervention. For trying to do so, only four days before Turkey's elections of 5 June, a number of generals including the Chief of Army, General Namut Kemal Ersun, had to be sacked.

It has been a rough period for what is one of the few parliamentary democracies in the developing world. The years of martial law from 1971-3 left the army counter-guerrilla units the MIT (Turkey's CIA) with a taste for power and the habit of intrigue. The Centre and Left saw their shadow behind much of the violence even though it has been the 'commandos' of retired Colonel Alparslan Türkes, who have been attracting the limelight.

With his bashful young bride and mild appearance it is hard to imagine the 60-year old Türkes reading out the military *pronunciamento* of 1960 when the army overthrew the increasingly dictatorial Adnan Menderes. Then he proved too reactionary even for his military colleagues, and was rapidly thrust aside. Today one minister in the four-party coalition headed by Suleyman Demirel describes Türkes, who was deputy prime minister, as 'a Hitler in his early days'.

A report by the Ministry of the Interior stresses the strict discipline of the squads which support him and which have been responsible for most of the recent political violence. With a hundred people dying so far this year, the death rate has been running at one quarter of Argentina's. So commonplace have these deaths become that the liberal newspaper *Milliyet* has been printing the running total in a box on its front page next to the traffic deaths.

It was mainly in the field of 'law and order' that Türkes dragged Demirel back to the 1930s. It is hard to understand why a man who had once been the Macmillan of Turkey should have allowed this to happen. But people are only just now remembering that one of Mr Demirel's characteristics has always been a love of caged birds – and wondering whether it was an endearing trait after all. The virtual lack of government in other fields by Demirel's Nationalist Front reflected not just the differences between the four parties but the bankruptcy of Turkish conservatism. Anarchy rather than laissez faire prevailed in the economic field. The only agreement the parties could reach on foreign policy was not to discuss it. Today there is a singular tastelessness in the gloating, dictated editorials in the pro-Demirel press about the problems facing Turkey's next government. It is almost as if Demirel would like Ecevit to take power so that it will be he who founders on the reefs the Nationalist Front has allowed to build up – the need to rush fez in hand to the IMF, to raise petrol prices, to curb inflation and to face up to the growing social tensions caused by unemployment of 20 per cent, and rising.

'The balloon must be deflated' has been the theme of Demirel's supporters, but it is a dangerous game trying to portray Ecevit as a mere windbag. The technocrats' scorn has been quick to descend on a man who is a self-taught intellectual, a 'dreamer' who writes idealistic poetry and translates Rabindranath Tagore and who, to cap it all, was a journalist.

Yet Ecevit is also one of the tougher politicians whom Turkey has seen. His half-year in office in 1974 saw him showing a

NEXT WEEK

Hugh Thomas:
Spain after the Election

A. J. P. Taylor:
Tom Driberg's Memoirs

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determination to be measured by the standdards of Kemal Atatürk, founder of the republic, and not those of the lesser figures who have since run the country. However, if he wants change, he is a reformist rather than a radical. It was he, not Demirel, who was once Dr Kissinger's student in the United States. His most disturbing quality is perhaps, at least to some people, his sense of his own destiny.

Ecevit's present bandwagon is one of the world's more bizarre. The Americans are on it, yet so are Turkey's communists: Ecevit has promised to lift the bans on freedom of association and expression. The left-wing union confederation ISR backs him, but the major industrialists have also just clambered noisily aboard. He has the support of landless peasants as well as of many of the feudal Kurdish sheikhs. That he has still failed to win a majority in Parliament reflects the age-old problem of parliamentary democracy in Turkey – that the country is committed to the reformist course of Atatürk, yet the bulk of the population whose vote is necessary to carry through this commitment is uneducated and with an obscurantist legacy which encourages them to vote against their own class interests. Arguably Ecevit's main contribution so far is in giving the dispossessed an understanding of the need for change and in turning his party, the Republican People's Party, into a vehicle for this change.

The elections have been followed by the major parties soliciting further contributions from Istanbul businessmen, with one party even approaching a company it has promised to nationalise. In Ankara itself the corridor-shuffling has been an ugly sight, as Ecevit seeks 'responsible' deputies who will either abstain from voting against him or transfer from other parties. One hope is that the moderate wing of the NSP led by Korkut Ozal, a forceful Minister of Agriculture, will support Ecevit.

Yet even if Ecevit fails to obtain a majority his cabinet could become the caretaker one and, for instance, stop the torture which was continuing right until the elections. The fear of the Left is that Ecevit's lack of a dependable majority means that his populist programme may be put on the shelf to gather as much dust as the jewels in the Ottoman treasury in Topkap. But a more favourable outcome is generally expected. Abroad, this would mean a more dynamic approach to Cyprus and an arguably tougher attitude on the Aegean. It would lead to Turkey reappraising its EEC arrangements and telling Nato that it is not prepared to be the policeman of the West in the eastern Mediterranean. At home, the hope is for the dawning of that 'bright liberal future' on which Ecevit campaigned during the election.

'Western diplomats' have been comparing Ecevit with J. F. Kennedy. It is a fanciful comparison, and one which reflects not only the contradictory and virtually impossible hopes he embodies but unease about the alternatives. With huge and growing social problems, the Kurdish question simmering just under the surface, and the coffers empty, it is no easy legacy which Ecevit has been given.

Ankara

Wilfred Beckerman

Reform or Bust

Now that the pomp and ceremony of the Jubilee celebrations are over – and, given the state of the British economy, they are reminiscent of the last days of the Austro-Hungarian empire – the nation has to face up to the fact that our economic prospects for the next decade or so, and possibly over the next few months, are little short of desperate. One of the reasons for this is a complete failure to reform institutions – both international and domestic.

On the international front the recent London summit conference at which nothing concrete was decided – except to let the Germans continue with high unemployment in spite of a strong balance of payments situation – epitomised the impotence of international institutions to replace the wreck of Bretton Woods with any effective machinery for international economic co-operation. There have been many reasons for the collapse of the international economic order that began in the late 1960s. These include the decline of US dominance in the world economy; the increasing intervention of governments in their domestic economies and hence their increased nationalism in international economic affairs; the emergence of important new actors on the world economic scene – notably Japan and, more recently, the oil-exporting countries; and the increased concern with the goal of checking inflation.

We now have a situation in which not only are there many important countries that have conflicting goals, but in which international agencies, such as the IMF are also seen by some groups as means of helping them fight their internal battles. For example, those groups in the advanced countries that prefer to use straight monetary discipline to check inflation will prefer an international set of rules that impose severe monetary restraints on member countries in return for short-term assistance. The existence of such rules makes it easier for the deflationists to claim that our hands are tied and, tragic and deplorable though they believe it to be, we simply have no option

but to pursue the policies thrust on us by the IMF. In other words, internal conflicts of interest, as much as international conflicts, make it difficult to expect any reform in international economic institutions.

Consequently, we are drifting into a situation of prolonged stagnation in the world as a whole, there being no international machinery to put pressure on those countries that are in a position to give a boost to their economies without unduly damaging their external balances. There is no mechanism to ensure that the huge deficit that has to be borne by the non-oil-exporting countries is accepted and shared out among them. Nor is any pressure put on countries whose internal price stability could bear the strain of a higher pressure of demand. Hence, the world economy is likely to stagnate for many years to come.

For Britain, this means that it is no longer a question of muddling through the next few months or so until world trade picks up and we can once more drag ourselves painfully along on the tail-end of high demand and rapid growth in the rest of the world, as we had been able to do for the two decades prior to 1973. Even then our economy did not perform all that well; but at least we avoided prolonged, heavy unemployment. In the new international economic climate we shall have to do much better than in the past if we are to survive at all.

Otherwise, in such an international economic context, the British economy would be doomed to permanent high unemployment. How long democracy could survive here under these conditions is a moot point. Already some of the uglier political and social consequences of high unemployment – especially among the young – are here to be seen. When I wrote about four years ago (NS 8 December 1972), in a critique of the Glyn and Sutcliffe book about how wage-push would help bring about the collapse of capitalism, that militant wage-push would, instead, be more likely to bring the extreme Right to power rather than the extreme Left it already did not require exceptional foresight. To repeat the same warning now requires even less.

But some reform of the wage negotiation machinery seems the only move left open to us. The underlying causes of our slow growth during the post-war period are complex and ill-understood – at least by professional students of the problem. They are probably partly rooted in historical and sociological developments that cannot be undone. But, in addition, this country seems to be saddled with a wage negotiation machinery that seems to be uniquely calculated to prevent anything like reasonable price stability being reconciled with high employment.

Over two years ago (NS 7 March 1975), in the wake of the oil crisis, I wrote that the magnitude of the crisis might galvanise politicians to make a start on reforming our wage negotiation machinery. But

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nothing of the sort was attempted. Instead, following Mr Heath's disastrous confrontation with the miners, we had a succession of short-term patchwork measures embodied in the first two stages of pay restraint. In a sense this was an achievement, in that it demonstrated that many trade union leaders were well aware of the abyss into which the economy – and British democracy – was about to fall. There are, of course, some union leaders (egged on by some of the far Left of the Labour Party), whose personal style of ego-trip takes the form of outright militancy and an attack on any wage restraint. But many union leaders, who see the economic and political consequences of runaway inflation, and who have been fighting fascism all their lives, have shown great courage in pushing through a temporary policy that was unpopular with large sections of their rank and file.

But it was inevitable that, sooner or later, the pressures on them to take a tougher line, or hand over direction of their unions to more militant candidates for office, would build up, and it remains to be seen how far they can hold the line in the next few weeks. If it cracks now, or if some phoney window-dressing pay deal is agreed that will be breached within a few weeks or months, inflationary expectations and the consequent speculative attack on the exchange rate could be far more damaging than anything we have seen so far.

Only a wage negotiation machinery that takes the pressure off the union leaders can ever get them off the hook long enough to enable reasonable price stability to be reconciled with continuous full employment in the cold economic climate into which the world has now entered. It is true that the trade union movement has not produced any constructive or imaginative ideas of its own, but the union leaders should not get all the blame. Unlike the Government, they have neither sought election nor been elected on any promise to solve Britain's economic problems.

They are victims of a machinery that leaves them little choice if they want to retain power in their own unions. To get them off the hook responsibility for allocating wage increases among individual unions must ultimately be transferred to a reformed TUC, which should have powers to match increased responsibilities. Union leaders should have to settle amongst themselves the way a feasible total wage bill is to be shared out, as is done in Norway and Sweden.

It is often argued that other countries have managed comparatively well without any such centralised machinery. But either they have not managed all that well in fact (witness the high unemployment accompanied by high inflation in Italy and France, with – at least in Italy – political stability already hanging by a thread), or they have very different union traditions and philosophies, as in the US, Japan and Germany. By contrast, Norway and Sweden have managed to achieve reasonable price stability without the massive unemployment that is widespread in the rest of the advanced countries.

Of course, it is too late now to achieve any major reform of wage negotiation machinery in time to see us through the next few months. During this period some short-term tough incomes restraint will have to be implemented, accompanied by some reflation of the economy even if this means – as it is likely to mean – some breach of the monetary targets laid down by the IMF. If such income restraint is not achieved in the next few weeks then any talk of what longer term reforms should follow it would be completely academic; there may not be any longer term situation in which democratic processes will be able to operate, let alone free trade unions. The most vociferous defenders of the rights of employees to indulge in the unsocialistic form of jungle warfare known as 'free collective bargaining' would be the first to be silenced, and possibly for ever.

But assuming that some adequate short-term restraint can be agreed, the worst thing for the Government to do would be to heave a sigh of relief at having overcome this hurdle once again and to turn to less unpleasant tasks. Every time it has to jump this hurdle the bar is raised and everybody concerned, including the union leaders, has become more and more exhausted.

Nor should it be thought that, as we get through the next few months, North Sea oil will see us through. This is just another piece of self-deception to justify a subconscious fear of tackling immensely difficult and unpopular tasks. As the Cambridge Department of Applied Economics has recently pointed out, North Sea oil could well make the medium term position even worse, not better. In any case, runaway inflation, whether this year or next, would have such disastrous effects on the exchange rate that a few hundred million pounds more or less of oil imports are neither here nor there.

Nor will North Sea oil save the Labour Government at the next election. At best – i.e. in the most unlikely event that the exchange rate held firm – it might enable us to reflate a bit and reduce unemployment slightly. But that is not the same as pretending that it represents a rainbow around the corner. The last chance of our seeing one of those disappeared with the collapse of all the recent hopes for a boom in the world economy.

Alexander Cockburn

Not So Gay America

In retrospect it was all somewhat of a miscalculation. Shortly before the vote in Dade County, Florida last week homosexuals around and in Miami actually thought they were going to win. That is, they thought the straight citizenry would rally round and vote to uphold a local ordinance that banned discrimination in employment and housing based on a person's 'affectional or sexual preference'.

How wrong they were. Just under 70 per cent of the voters, in a fairly heavy turn-out for a referendum, plunged into the polling booths and elected to repeal the aforementioned ordinance. Their action represented a splendid victory for the Book of Leviticus ('If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination') and for the leading exponent of that portion of holy scripture, namely Anita Bryant. Bryant, best known as a booster for Florida's oranges, is president of Save Our Children Inc. and a person who has solemnly declared that God sent the drought to California as punishment for that state's lax legal attitude to Sodom.

The battle over gay rights in Dade County was regarded as particularly significant since it was the first referendum in a major city on the question of how far the straight majority was prepared to go in the matter of homosexual rights under the law. Campaigners on the gay side likened their cause to civil rights encounters at the time of Selma. As someone sourly remarked later, it is fairly clear what local voters in Selma thought of civil rights at the time and it is fairly clear now that almost never in the United States will a majority vote in favour of a minority. The minority has to run not to the polling booths, but to the courts, where federal judges do not have to answer to anyone.

The trouble was that those voters in Miami were actually being asked to approve of homosexuality, rather than merely to tolerate it. In the event the liberal Jewish vote was split, the blacks were indifferent and the Cuban exile community passionately opposed. Now Bryant, a Southern Baptist frequently photographed at prayer with her family before a domestic altar, is opening a national office to continue the struggle against Satan. The gay organisers talk bravely, in somewhat familiar tones, of their 'victory', in clarifying the issue, staking out the battlefield and so forth, but they are in fact stunned and depressed. 'All across America', one of them said to me, 'gays will be springing back into the closet.' Others speak of an impending wave of sexual McCarthyism and evoke the days after the Wilde trial when the boat-train to the Continent was allegedly laden with exiles, carrying their proclivities to safer climes.

This may be a little alarmist. Around the time of the vote, one of the best known stars in Hollywood was consecrating his 15-year relationship with his boyfriend in a marriage ceremony attended by the elite cadres of Hollywood's extensive homosexual community. There's no business like show business, as we all know, but it doesn't look as though some neo-McCarthyite will be brandishing Hollywood's Top Ten deviants in the Congress.

It's true that if the Miami vote were to be held in New York the result would probably be much the same. Nevertheless, keeping clear of the ballot-box and hence direct appeals to the straight majority, gays

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now have considerable political power. Within hours of the Miami vote every major candidate for the mayoral primary election next autumn in New York, with the exception of the incumbent Abe Beame, had come out in support of gay rights. Personal values aside, it's a matter of practical politics.

Nowhere is the voting power of homosexuals more evident than in San Francisco. Pollsters reckon that about 30 per cent of the male electorate there is homosexual. Sheriff Richard Hongisto cordially admits he won office by campaigning arduously in the gay community. The mayor, George Moscone, who probably owes his election to these voters, has a gay liaison worker in his office and publicly opposed Bryant's campaign in Miami. Still, there's a lot of territory between New York and San Francisco, and fewer seekers after elected office pressing the flesh in gay bars. Nor, it should be said, has any major politician in the United States so far publicly admitted to being a homosexual as opposed to being an alcoholic. Over the last couple of years at least two members of the US Congress (one Senator and one Representative) have discussed with their aides the possibility of 'coming out'. Both, persuaded of the prospect of instant defeat at the polls, desisted.

Advances will be made, slowly and piecemeal, in the courts and through government regulations. Not so long ago, for example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, pronouncing on the matter of who should be eligible for low-income accommodation, extended the definition of a family beyond marriage, blood relationship or adoption to couples having 'a stable relationship'. Local housing authorities operating under such criteria will thus be able to allocate, should they feel inclined, cheap housing to homosexual couples.

The shift is not smooth. But Anita Bryant and her co-campaigners should meditate on some of the basic changes in American society since the war. The emblem of their crusade – the family – has been under constant and increasing assault. Welfare laws conspire to rend it apart, with women – the vast bulk of the recipients – eligible only if a wage-earning husband is not present in the home. Patterns of consumption – centred on the homebody wife – are in flux with the avalanche of women entering the work force. With the wife at work and the children in day-care the kitchen gives way to the fast-food counter and the washing machine to the outside laundry. The great dream of every American (along with the automobile), namely the single-family home, is itself giving way to more energy-efficient and cheaper apartments or condominiums. The mobility of labour – so earnestly desired by Government and business – further erodes the secure family unit.

So with the family under great pressure and in the midst of change, the social threat of homosexuality as a perverse challenge to economic and social norms is becoming gradually blunted. Sodom and Gomorrah, as manifested in New York or San Francisco, become portents rather than peculiar exceptions – and Miami more of a last ditch than an omen for the future.

New York

Peter Wilby

The Diploma Disease

A century ago Bagehot remarked that civilisations may fall because they fail to comprehend the great institutions they have created. The mighty apparatus of education is one of the most striking creations of the 20th century. We have scarcely begun to understand its profound social and economic effects. In the early part of this century it was possible to begin work in many professional careers at the age of 14. Now even a university degree frequently requires further full-time professional training. For many people, full-time formal education does not end and work begin until the age of 23 or 24. Within 70 years, the period of childhood and adolescence has been increased by more than 50 per cent, from a period equivalent to little more than a fifth of a man's active life to a period closer to one-third.

Has education expanded in this dramatic fashion because people need to know more or to understand more or to acquire more skills? It has not. Schools and colleges have long ago lost sight of educational goals. They have become the licensing agencies, the personnel offices of the nation, issuing certificates or passports that allow the holders to cross social and occupational boundaries.

The expansion of education has been almost wholly attributable to the inflation of certificates. This phenomenon has been called 'the qualification spiral' or 'the diploma disease' or 'the great training robbery'. It has six distinct stages. First, a profession introduces written examinations to test the competence of its entrants. Initially, these examinations are to help test mastery of what has been learnt on the job during a kind of apprenticeship training. Second, it is permitted, as an alternative, to take the written examination prior to entry, with the material being learnt on a full-time course. Third, the pre-career examination becomes the normal, and ultimately, the sole method of entry. Some element of post-entry training may be required as a final requirement for full professional status. But this is increasingly a formality. Fourth, a profession offers partial or complete exemption either from its written examinations or from its practical training or from both to those holding specified educational qualifications, such as O and A levels. Fifth, a profession introduces minimum levels of general educational qualification (such as five O levels) for those wishing to study for its written exams. Finally, these minimum levels rise steadily – five O levels become two A levels, for example.

Imagine what might have happened had educators taken hold of the driving test. Driving a motor-car is surely an activity that requires high levels of skill, and intelligence, not to say social responsibility. A minimum of five O levels would be required before anyone could take the test. Then there would be a full-time course of study. In the early days of the motor-car, this might have been quite short and simple but it is easy to see that, as motoring becomes more complex, something of the order of a three-year full-time course would be required. The sociology of the pedestrian, the mathematics of traffic flow, the science and technology of the internal combustion engine, the physiology of hand, foot and eye coordination, the linguistics of traffic signs, the economics of car ownership – there is no end to the syllabus that the ingenious educator could design. But common sense tells us (and this applies not just to the private motorist but to the lorry or bus driver) that the best way of learning to drive is to get into the driving-seat.

Common sense has not been allowed to prevail in other walks of life. In librarianship, for example, the qualification spiral has taken over, as Professor Ronald Dore records in his recent book, *The Diploma Disease*. At the beginning of the century, the librarian needed only 'a love of books and the capacity to advise the managers as to purchases, and inquirers as to suitable works'. In other words, he had to be enthusiastic about, and competent at, his job. By the 1930s, a school certificate was a useful possession. By 1950 it was the minimum requirement. In the following decade the minimum apprenticeship period of three years was replaced by two years of full-time librarianship study, plus a one-year apprenticeship. By 1970 the minimum requirement was two A levels. Since then, the Library Association has been looking towards a graduate entry profession and even the one-year apprenticeship period has been waived for university graduates.

This is the normal pattern for a professional association since the war – the accountants, the actuaries, the solicitors and the surveyors have acted similarly. The pattern is to have established the school certificate (or five O levels) as a minimum qualification in the 1950s, to have introduced a one A level requirement in the 1960s, to have introduced two A levels in the 1970s and to be looking towards a predominantly and perhaps wholly graduate entry in the 1980s.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants is one body that has recently introduced a two A level entry requirement. That would have automatically disqualified some 40 per cent of those who sat its examinations in 1972. It is now virtually impossible to enter a teacher training course without one or, more commonly, two A levels. The major qualification in art and design also requires two A levels. A few years ago it was possible to learn to teach or to paint with just five O levels. Chartered engineering bodies – the majority of whose current members qualified through part-time certificate study – now require degrees for entry.

A number of what are traditionally regarded as lower-status occupations, particularly in the health service, have recently

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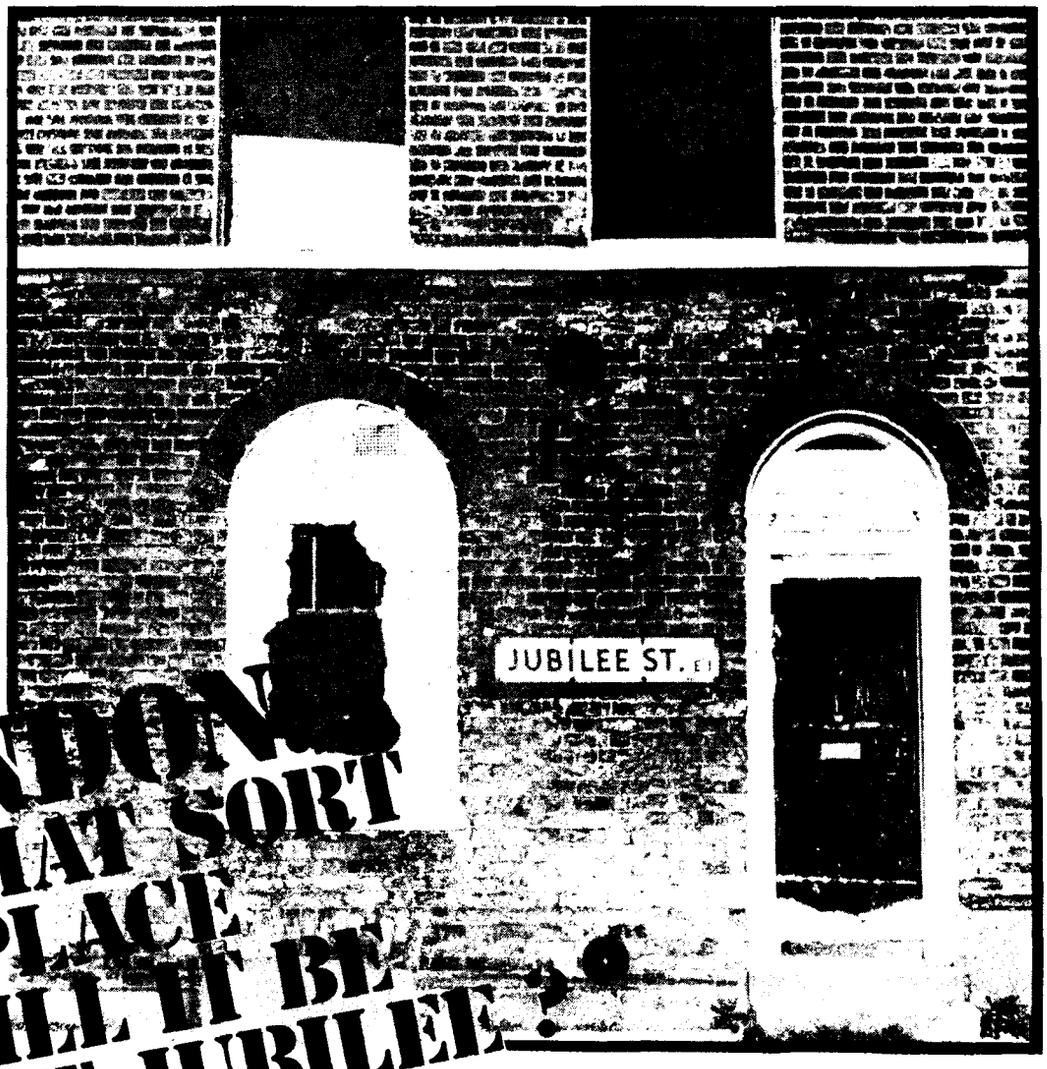

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followed the lead of the more established professions. The College of Speech Therapists, the Society of Radiographers, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, the Association of Occupational Therapists, the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators – all these bodies have introduced A level requirements for their entrants within the last five years. The two A level qualification will soon be as essential as the school certificate of earlier generations, and it is becoming a selective hurdle comparable in its effects to the old 11-plus.

What, apart from snobbery, ignorance and prejudice, are the causes of this qualification spiral? The first is that any profession likes to raise its status. Then it can charge higher fees. A profession of university graduates obviously has more social status (insofar as it is presumed to have cleverer and better educated people) than one of school certificate holders.

But it is not only important to convince your customers of your status. It is equally important to convince your potential recruits. So, second, by raising entry qualifications, the professions stake their claims to clever people. If you have two A levels, you think of entering professions that require two A levels for entry, not those that require five O levels. Otherwise you might feel you have wasted your time taking A levels.

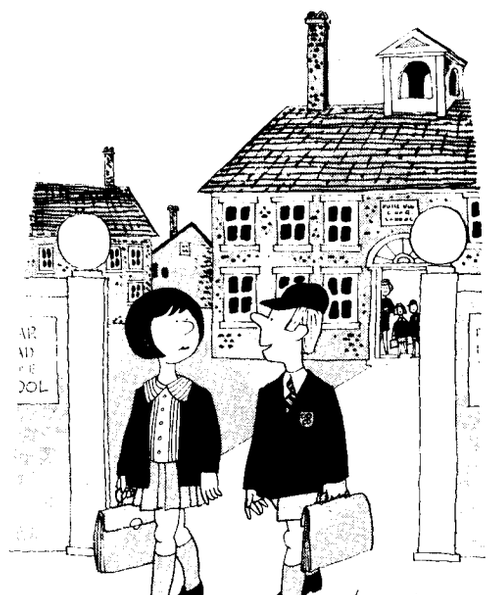
A third cause of the qualification spiral is that the increase in formal educational requirements and the reduction in on-the-job training enables private and professional bodies to transfer the costs of training and recruitment to the public purse. The direct costs of training are met by the publicly-financed university or polytechnic, not by the profession or the private firm. The student's living expenses are met by a maintenance grant, not by a wage or a salary. The time and costs of sifting applicants and entrants for private and professional jobs are met by publicly-financed examinations, not the profession's own tests. Better still, formal, full-time college courses in professional subjects mean more teachers in those subjects and, therefore, more jobs, at public expense, for the profession's own members.

But the most important function of the qualification spiral is undoubtedly its capacity to regulate supply. Rising qualifications reflect rising expectations. As more people aspire to enter the professional classes and undertake the education necessary to qualify, higher requirements are a way, so to speak, of keeping the barbarians from the gates. In this way, education, like unspoilt countryside, becomes what Professor Fred Hirsch has called a 'positional' good. As more people acquire it, it changes its character. A university degree ceases to be a passport to exclusive jobs, and a couple of O levels cease to be worth anything at all. One is reminded of Groucho Marx who did not want to belong to any club that would accept him as a member.

The qualification spiral is not confined to the professions. It has spread to private industry and the public sector. And, if it could be demonstrated that more education led to higher productivity and efficiency, or even to greater happiness at work, we would need to worry no further about it. But there is little evidence of this nature.

It is easy enough to show that those with above-average educational achievements have above-average lifetime earnings. It could also be shown that readers of *The Times* have above-average incomes. But not even Mr Rees-Mogg would argue that the one was the cause of the other. There is no satisfactory evidence that people with university degrees earn more money because of what they have done at university, rather than because they just happen to be clever. On the contrary, American studies, summarised by Professor Ivar Berg in *Education and Jobs*, have revealed no significant correlation between levels of education and levels of productivity. In his study of *Inequality*, based on the great volume of data gathered for the Coleman Report, Professor Christopher Jencks wrote:

> Within any given occupation, an extra year of school or college is associated with an average salary advantage of only 2 to 3 per cent. The difference seems, moreover, largely to reflect differences in cognitive skill between those with more and less schooling. If we compare men who not only are in the same occupations, but also have similar test scores, there seems to be virtually no relationship between schooling and earnings. This suggests that men with extra education make more money largely because they enter lucrative occupations, not because education enhances their earning power thereafter.



'It's a great plan. You spend fifty or sixty years getting educated, and then retire without ever having gone to work.'

Where is the evidence that passes in two A level subjects – so widely demanded by private, public and professional employers – represent the acquisition of skills and knowledge that are at all relevant to, say, accountancy or law or business? Last year, the *Sunday Times* attempted to find out, through a survey of top businessmen. Eighty-five per cent of those questioned thought that the work they had done for examinations (*not* the results) had been helpful in furthering their careers. Seventy-one per cent attached importance to exam results when making appointments in their own organisations. But the employers were also asked to say which, out of a list of 25 personal attributes, were the most important in senior management. Then they were asked to say which attributes were developed mainly by academic work and which by professional experience. The results were unequivocal. The businessmen voted the following as the top four attributes: the ability to take decisions, leadership, integrity and enthusiasm, in that order. And these four attributes were identified by overwhelming majorities as qualities developed by professional experience, not by academic work. The two attributes that were most strongly identified as being developed by academic work were 'capacity for lucid writing' and 'capacity for abstract thought'. These were voted 22nd and 25th respectively.

So the businessmen themselves identified the qualities required at work as different from the qualities required by academic study. Why, then, do they persist with their reliance on examination results? To save their personnel departments trouble, perhaps. The *Sunday Times*, commenting on its survey, pointed out that any alternative system of selection would be costly and time-consuming. And so it would – for the employers. But would it, overall, be any more costly and time-consuming than our present elaborate system? The cost of setting, marking and administering last summer's O level, A level and CSE exams was £12m. – more than was set aside for the entire nursery school building programme in the current financial year.

There is little evidence, then, that certificate inflation has any positive benefits. It can be shown, however, that it has harmful effects. First, qualifications distort the secondary school curriculum. School examinations originated as qualifiers for university. To this day the universities control the GCE awards. So all the pressures within the system are for people to take theoretical, academic exams, based on theoretical, academic syllabuses. When professions set five O levels as entry qualifications, they will not 'count' examinations in practical and applied subjects. The professional bodies for architects, surveyors and town planners, and many engineering institutions, will not count woodwork, metalwork and technical drawing towards their O level entry requirements. Astonishingly, the Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management Association will not count cookery. Why? Because such subjects are not taken by clever people; they are taken by children destined for non-professional occupations.

The only way of persuading professional bodies to accept these subjects is to stuff them with spurious facts and theories, to make academic what is essentially practical. Instead of making a button-hole, children have to describe how to make one. Thus the less academic children can no longer pass the examinations. Those who can pass the examinations are no longer capable of actually doing anything with what they have learnt. Basic, practical skills – standards of achievement and of competence – are driven out of the curriculum. Is it any coincidence that, as the number of children studying for and gaining academic certificates has risen, so has the concern about standards of literacy and numeracy increased?

The second harmful aspect of the qualification spiral is that it is socially regressive. Working-class representation among uni-

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versity students has remained unchanged for 50 years. For every additional working-class student recruited during university expansion, three extra middle-class students were recruited. A current social mobility study, directed by A. H. Halsey, Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, shows that, since the war, the *relative* differences between a working-class child's chances of getting a university place and a middle-class child's chances have actually increased.

Meanwhile, opportunities for non-graduates to aspire to professional careers, either through lower-level qualifications or through on-the-job promotion, are diminishing. For the majority of working-class youngsters, the prospects of a professional career are as dim as they ever were. It is a truism of educational research that the middle-class child is infinitely better equipped to take advantage of formal full-time education, particularly academic education, than the working-class child.

It is frequently argued that, in a world of more white-collar occupations, more service industries, more technology-based industries, more change, more information, we need a longer period of formal education prior to entering it. This view seems profoundly misconceived, even perverse. How can it possibly be argued that a more complicated world requires people to shut themselves away from it, in schools and colleges, for longer and longer periods?

Our present system of qualification guarantees incompetence, not competence. The road to genuine competence in a complex and changing society is to reduce the period of initial formal education and to invest, first, in more initial on-the-job training, where knowledge can be absorbed at its point of application, and, second, in more retraining and updating.

Should we not be as concerned with re-testing the competence of the already qualified as with the testing of the new entrant? It is ludicrous that we should be in so concerned that our professionals should acquire the right number of certificates at 16, at 18 and at 21 and yet so unworried about them becoming outdated or incompetent in mid-career. What British professional association has adequate machineery – or, for that matter, any machinery at all – for expelling incompetent colleagues?

I make the following modest proposal. We should cut the normal period of formal full-time education for a professional by at least four years – so that he leaves school at 17, instead of university at 21. He should then have half-time education for his first three years in the profession and a further six months full-time education every subsequent seven years. That would give us the same four years' worth of education, but spread through the professional's career to the age of 55, not completed at 21.

Only through this kind of radical rethinking can Western society take control of the educational monster that it has created. The remedies against the diploma disease, or the security against the training robbery, must be drastic. The professions should confine themselves to testing competence for the performance of professional tasks. They should cease to use 'proxies' for qualification (such as O and A levels) unless they can demonstrate their relevance. These principles should be enforced by legislation, because the civil rights of a large portion of the population are at stake. Indeed the qualification and examination procedures employed by professional bodies – who, in any case, derive their exclusive licensing rights from the state – should be subject to parliamentary scrutiny. The description of qualifications for employment training in terms of school certificates received should be prohibited. Schools should be allowed to provide to employers and to post-secondary institutions only such evidence of a student's achievement that is directly relevant to the job or the training concerned.

These proposals do not arise from any desire to abolish examinations. I believe that examinations are essential where competence in relevant skills is to be tested. Nor do my arguments spring from any philosophy of de-schooling. On the contrary, I believe that the preservation of an adequate schooling system for all children up to the age of 16 depends on limiting the endless and pointless inflation of post-16 education and certification.

There are a few causes for optimism. In Canada, two provincial commissions of inquiry have made recommendations, roughly similar to my proposals, within the last five years. In Australia, a federal government inquiry is, at this moment, considering, among other things, 'the role of educational qualifications in credentialling or selecting people for jobs'. The problem is extremely urgent. The costs of not considering the remedies for the diploma disease will increase as the years go by: costs in terms of massive public expenditure on education for little return; growing social injustice; increasing human waste and frustration; the degradation of our schools; and the incompetence of our professional classes.

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Jeremy Bugler

Missing Faces at Windscale

The Windscale inquiry, which will occupy the bright civic hall of the little Cumbrian town of Whitehaven for the next three months or so, has at its heart one remarkable matter. For the first time the British nuclear industry is being asked publicly to justify one of its plans and to put aside its reflexive secrecy. The inquiry, which opened on Tuesday this week under Mr Justice Parker and two assessors, may because of this one novelty prove to be a decisive public hearing in our social history.

In the first days Parker's piece was everything that it should be: held under an inspector who is clear and humorous, matching articulate applicants against a mass of well-prepared opponents. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, the state company, have put a brave face on having to justify in any way their plan to build a £600m. oxide fuel reprocessing plant: 'this international nuclear laundromat', as it has been called. Until a turn-around day in November last year, BNFL expected the Government to pass through their plan. Now BNFL, and in effect the British nuclear industry, find themselves in a packed public hall awash with green baize and silk (no less than six QCs are at work) with their executives ready to face close cross-examination and argument. For BNFL it must be a kind of public horror.

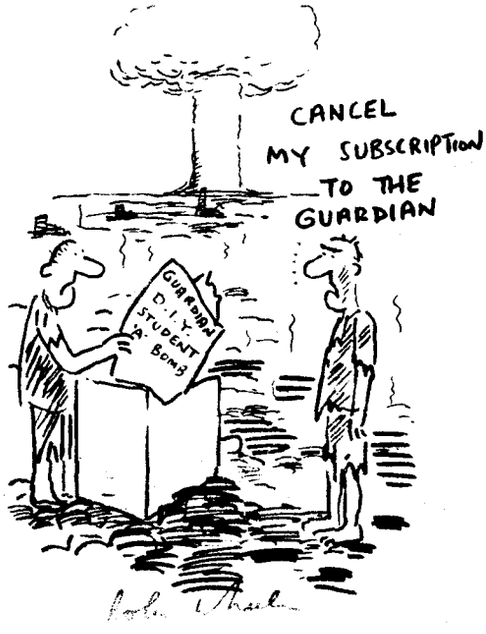
Civil nuclear industry in almost every country has operated in secrecy, born of their interconnection with the war materials industry. And since the toxic material plutonium, with its inconvenient half-life of 24,500 years, is at the heart of the civil industry's plans, Mr James Kidwell, QC, for Friends of the Earth, was only accurate when he claimed on the opening day that this plan to build 'one reprocessing plant in one small country, England' will be 'watched with acute interest and anxiety throughout the world'. The presence among objectors of the Quakers, the lawyers of Justice, the National Council for Civil Liberties shows that this is no mere technical matter of energy, efficiency and investment. Within 30 minutes of the inquiry opening the large issues of nuclear security and democracy, of nuclear proliferation and of future energy supplies had been raised.

Public inquiries at their best educate. The Windscale inquiry may, at the end of its time, have raised public consciousness a notch or two in an area where the techno-wizardry of nuclear physics still snow-blinds many people. Forgotten facts are being brought back to light. The daily pollution of the Irish Sea by low-level waste from the existing Windscale plant will be increased under the new plans. Mr George Dobry, QC, for the Isle of Man government, brought notice that the concentration of plutonium in the sea near the Windscale discharge pipe is 26 times higher than in the waters of a Pacific island, Enewetak, used by the US for testing nuclear weapons. It is [illegible] higher than in the open ocean. How many know this is happening to part of the Irish Sea?

The inquiry, moreover, offers the crucial prospect of BNFL executives being made to answer the hard questions. On the face of it, BNFL's plan is a little extraordinary. Pejoratively, Mr Dobry called it 'an experiment', and this is why. Up till recently BNFL had no plans for a huge reprocessing plant. They already had a little one called the head-end plant. In 1973 the plant suffered a serious accident and closed down. It has not yet been reopened, though its through-put was a modest 25 tons a year. One writer, in this light, has viewed BNFL's new plan for a 1,200-ton plant as similar to an aviation firm planning to build a transsonic airliner after its first project, a small biplane, had crashed on its maiden flight. Overstating it, perhaps, but the objectors will be stressing that no country anywhere, even the US, has managed to get an oxide fuel reprocessing plant on this scale to work. The Americans have lost millions in trying, for all their nuclear skill.

The opponents are arguing that if reprocessing of domestic fuels arising from Britain's AGRs (Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors) is considered necessary, then the head-end plant should be refurbished. Excess waste can be stored until disposal methods have been perfected. BNFL say that a large plant makes more economic sense because the running and capital costs will be part-shared by foreign countries, especially Japan.

Here the inquiry may have an especial value: so far, all the details of the BNFL-Japanese contract have not been published, with BNFL pleading commercial confidentiality. But can it do so at Whitehaven if the inquiry is to keep its faith? And when Mr Dobry or Mr Kidwell or Mr David Widdicombe, QC, for the umbrella group Windscale Appeal, ask for details we may find the contract implies an extraordinary anxiety by the Japanese to get rid of their waste. Then the inquiry may concentrate on the waste problem, for while fuel reprocessing may produce new fuel, it also provides old wastes. Will the Japanese get their wastes back? If not, how advanced is British waste treatment? The Flower's Report implied that the nuclear industry is better at describing its solutions – putting waste in glass blocks, and so on – than in carrying them out.



More than this, will the Japanese get their plutonium back – the plutonium separated from the reprocessed oxide fuel? The issue of plutonium in two ways falls over the inquiry: it is present in this matter of returning plutonium, which raises the question of weapons proliferation and it is, of course, present in the issue of the fast-breeder reactor.

On the opening day, the applicants and their supporters, Cumbria County Council, brought up the breeder issue straight out. It came out in this form: the reprocessing does not imply the fast-breeder reactor (for which the Government has promised a full public inquiry of its own) but if Britain fails to begin reprocessing soon, it will close off the option of the breeder, which may be our only safety net for a possible future energy gap.

Probably, this argument is nonsense: if the Government won't let BNFL build its plant, it can still dust down the plans later should the breeder be thought to be needed. What may have impressed people listening in Whitehaven Hall is the way the applicants' argument indicates that the industry really does see the reprocessing plant as the first stage to the breeder. BNFL's laundromat may not *logically* imply the breeder but practically it is likely to. One needs only a dullard's imagination to hear future politicians and industrialists contending that as we have spent £600m, on a plant producing plutonium fuel, we'd be fools not to build a breeder in which to put it.

In this practical sense some of the key witnesses are those who *won't* be at Windscale. Sir Arnold Weinstock, whose GEC might have much of the fast-breeder construction business, will not be there. Hugh Scanlon, who was telling an *Any Questions?* audience last month that the fast breeder was to be the saving of us all, and no doubt especially his engineers, will not be there (he likened the FBR to a brewery using yeast to make beer). John Lyons, General Secretary of the Electrical Power Engineers' Association, whose members will have their fingers on the switches of the FBR control panels, will not be there.

But these absentees will be very much there when the Government comes round to making up its mind about Mr Justice Parker's final report. The greatest value of the Windscale inquiry is that the private lobbyists may, through the inquiry, have their influence diminished by this public airing of the issues. The plutonium economy, according to BNFL's opponents at Whitehaven, will not tolerate the open society. The free forum of Windscale holds out a little hope that the open society will not [illegible] plutonium economy.

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London Diary

☐ Aren't we in danger of getting into a great muddle over honours? On all sides we were assured last Saturday that there were no *political* honours in the Jubilee list. The *Guardian* even claimed to detect 'the strong and wholesome smell of carbolic soap' in Mr Callaghan's third effort at cleaning up the system after his predecessor's excesses. Yet the complaint against Sir Harold never arose out of political honours: it was the *personal* nature of so many of his nominees (especially in his final resignation fling) that provoked all the scandal. And anyway how well defined is the line between honours awarded for 'political' and those given for 'public' services? The two names that delighted me most in last weekend's list were those of Bill Wedderburn and Barbara Wootton, both of them erstwhile NS contributors. Few people, I'm sure, will begrudge Bill Wedderburn his life peerage or Lady Wootton her Companionship of Honour. But by insisting that such awards as these are non-political, whom does Downing Street think it is kidding? Would Mrs Thatcher really have felt moved to bestow a peerage on Professor Wedderburn – who not only outgunned the CBI representatives on the Bullock Committee, but also provides a good part of the intellectual muscle in the earlier fight against the Industrial Relations Act? Barbara Wootton (one of the original life peers in 1958, though then openly one of Hugh Gaitskell's Labour nominees) may now have reached the kind of age when one is seen as being 'above' party; but I still do not recall any well known Tories rushing to join the Prime Minister at the 80th birthday dinner party that was given for her last April. It seems to me that it's a dangerous game of make-believe that Jim Callaghan is engaged in. Just how dangerous the Labour Party will, no doubt, discover – when it sees a future Tory government awarding a 'non-political' peerage to Professor Max Beloff or saluting Professor Milton Friedman with an honorary KBE.

☐ The Commonwealth leader who made the greatest impact on me this past week was Morarji Desai. With Jomo Kenyatta absent, he was at 81 easily the oldest of the Commonwealth heads of government – but on both occasions that I met him he struck me as uncommonly spry. On *Panorama* he made rings round David Dimbleby – and he had done much the same earlier in the day at lunch with a group of Fleet Street editors. Someone there made the mistake of quoting a remark about Gandhians being 'cranks' and I particularly relished the self-deprecating way in which Mr Desai immediately took the word up and used it in order to drive home his own points. He was in equally trenchant form at Tuesday night's dinner given by the Indian Journalists' Association, his last engagement in London before leaving for a banquet President Giscard was giving for him in Paris on Wednesday night. Not that anyone should get the wrong impression: all I saw Mr Desai eat on the two occasions I was with him was a little fresh melon, some fruit salad and a few nuts.

☐ The world could also take a lesson in civilised behaviour from the Indians. It's no secret that the High Commission here in London was throughout all the 20 months of the emergency an energetic propaganda unit for Mrs Gandhi – the High Commissioner, Mr B. K. Nehru, once even tangling on a public platform with Ron Hayward, the general secretary of the Labour Party, when the latter presumed to voice some concern about civil liberties. Yet Mr Nehru, though he is now about to retire, was not replaced by the new government and indeed acted as host to Mr Desai this week. Similarly with his number two, the Deputy High Commissioner, K. Natwar-Singh. One of Mrs Gandhi's former closest associates (having once served as her private secretary) he may have been, tactfully, 'on leave' throughout the Commonwealth Conference; but there was certainly nothing sinister about that as he has just been appointed his country's next High Commissioner in Zambia. But as the ultimate proof of Indian generosity, I cannot resist recording the fact that among the guests invited to meet Mr Desai on Monday night at the High Commissioner's residence was Mrs Gandhi's former cheer-leader in Britain, Mr Michael Foot.

☐ I can't pretend to have been much impressed by Ian McIntyre's defiant assertion in the *Sunday Express* that his rejigged Radio 4 *Today* programme is now packing the listeners in. He provided, I noticed, no detailed figures to back up his claim – though they must be available on those audience-measurement yellow sheets that within the BBC enjoy much the same security status as troop levels have for the Soviet Government. But the very fact that Ian McIntyre should be reduced to arguing even a general numerical case proves how much he is on the ropes. It is not, after all, so long (less than two years to be precise) since he was writing in the *Listener*: 'I have never been persuaded that the number of people who listen to a programme tells us much about the value or quality of what is broadcast.' Hard, I suppose, even for McIntyre to pretend that the new *Today* has much to offer in terms of 'value' or 'quality' – hence, no doubt, his new found enthusiasm for statistics.

☐ Not long ago Sidney Bernstein kindly sent me the printed text of the sermon Father Gerard Irvine preached at the requiem mass for Tom Driberg, held last December at St Mary's Bourne Street. With Tom's book of memoirs, *Ruling Passions*, coming out next week – and literary London brimming over with excitement at the scatological details it is said to contain – I went back to the sermon, candidly wondering whether Father Irvine would feel at all afflicted by embarrassment next Thursday. It doesn't seem to me he needs to be apprehensive at all. In the first place, at Tom's request, the sermon took the form of an 'antipanegyric' – rather than the panegyric normal on these occasions. Secondly, Father Irvine, an old friend, did not mince his words, going through the seven deadly sins and awarding what he called 'a Tom-rating' for each. Of sloth and envy Tom was, quite rightly, acquitted and there was at least a plea of mitigation in the case of pride. Avarice and wrath caused more problems but here again the verdict was mixed. The real difficulty came, of course, with gluttony and lust. But even over these, whatever Tom may turn out to have written, Father Irvine is pretty well insured. To both he virtually entered a *nolo contendere* – 'gluttony: certainly no question about it' and 'lust: of course he made no secret of it, nor of the directions it led him'. Even more to the point perhaps was his lumping together of the two. Declared Father Irvine 'His sexual activities suggest gluttony' – an impression, from all I hear, that Tom's book will fully bear out.

☐ I reproduce the following from a fascinating booklet, recently published by the Luton branch of the WEA, giving one woman's account of her life in working-class London between 1914 and 1939. Entitled *Canary Girls & Stockpots*, its author, Edith Hall, opens her story with this first paragraph:

> Just prior to the Great War of 1914 when I was about six years old, postcards with the then half-penny postage were sent between my relations each day. My grandmother would send us a card *each evening* which we received by first delivery the next morning. She would then receive our reply card the *same evening*. If one lived in the same town as one's correspondent, an early morning posted card would be delivered at 12 mid-day the same day and a reply card, if sent immediately, would be received the same afternoon.

And a happy, ninepenny-one to all our readers.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Deaves: 'Why did you decide to send Prince Charles to university?'

Prince Philip: 'Well, I didn't decide to send him to university. These things sort of happen. He qualified, we mulled it over with various people and really settled on Cambridge originally because it was convenient to Sandringham and in a part of the world that he knew.' – *Cambridge Evening News* (G. K. Batchelor)

☐ **Mr Jones, landlord of the 300-year-old Rose and Crown, said: 'One Belgian tried to strangle me. I did not mind him at my throat, but I took exception to a drunken foreigner grabbing my precious 1st Airborne Division tie.' – *Daily Mirror* (Leonard Parkin)**

☐ Dorset's assistant chief constable, Mr Len Burt, has told his 1,085 officers: 'Mingle with the community – especially at parties. I want people to realise the police are human. We want the men to visit parties, take their helmets off and have a cup of tea and a sticky bun.' – *Daily Mirror* (Alison Wertheimer)

☐ **Margaret said she used to be a State Registered Nurse and had been in a car crash which 'changed her attitude'. She became a call girl. – *News of the World* (J. R. Soames)**

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University Forum

Mick Shepherd*

The Time Swallower

THWOKKK! A sharp solid noise cuts across the low-key cacophony of cluttering cups and slow conversation that fills the Sunday afternoon coffee-bar. Almost an alien noise and right there, over by the door is its source, a pinball machine – Wild Life by Gottlieb of Chicago. Gawdy and sensuous it stands alone, aloof from its surroundings. Attached to it by means of its arms and fingers is a leather-jacketed, blue-jeaned dementoid with three-day beard and deep-set eyes that look like they're somewhere else; his body a series of small controlled convulsions as he urges, nudges and sways with the machine, desperately trying to 'relite' the bonus scores and earn himself another replay. Fingers hitting the flipper buttons in staccato bursts are interspersed with groans and gestures as the silver ball loops and darts along its travels.

Born out of Chicago in the 1930s, the pinball machine emerged into the depression to use the one over-abundant commodity of that period – time. These original pintables (some of which, amazingly, endure to this day) were quite primitive; lacking any means of player control apart from a good shove, the object simply was to try and get the balls to fall into combinations or patterns in the grid of holes in the play field. In 1947 the late Henry Mab invented the solenoid-activated flipper and the game of pinball as we know it was born, developing in only a few years into its present form. Generally the newer machines (which are still built in Chicago) are faster, brighter, and feature drop targets in addition to pop-bumpers which were the central feature of the slower and less exciting machines of the immediate post-flipper era. Nevertheless, some classic old machines such as 'Magic City' or 'Lady Luck' still offer more adrenelin-producing moments than the newer models.

Superb in its unrelatedness to the real world which surrounds it, pinball facilitates total and pure escapism – a complete fantasy factory is encapsulated inside every machine. Standing there, it is an energy centre, waiting, primed, serene and patient. On the backboard and the playfield is the theme which the machine is designed around, usually a legend or a modern myth, laid out in garish artwork. This is pinball's own little Hollywood full of the most delicious and vulgar follies. There it is, a ready-made background for your own true fantasy, a machine which offers the opportunity of being a star in your own movie at the drop of a 10p bit.

But what use is a star-maker machine if it turns out broken heroes? Pinball is not easy. Pinball tests and challenges and overloads your sensory inputs and invites you to do something about it. So, first off, you've got to learn how to play. There's technique to learn, timing to perfect – it's a game of skill and to acquire that you have to put in time and practice. Most of all you have got to play with self-control and dignity. This is important because pinball brings out some of the major demons of the human condition – ambition, frustration, physical and sexual aggression. Sometimes you have to struggle to mellow the machine, to sway it until you get right in 'synch' with it. This is where the self-control comes in because it is never, never any use trying to beat the make; it's no use trying to tame it or to kill it. You've just got to keep right on until you merge with it. Good pinball is not about power.

Take one player and he's trying to ride the machine like a maniac, trying to hammer it into the ground, shoulders shaking, hips pumping into the coinbox, he's trying to push it clear through the wall. And when the machine does not respond, he gets mad. He kicks, he swears, he spits at the machine. That's sad, because you know really that the machine has beaten him. Take another player and he's moving too, but this one has recognised the need for calm. At first he cajoles and persuades the machine with intimate little nudges and shoves, trying to find the rhythm. When he does he soars and there is a flow between the man and the machine. Here the machine isn't being raped; love is being made. Up the ball soars, right up to the lit special target and there the pinball's got its own electro-mechanical orgasm . . . THWOKKK. A passionate relationship with a glass and metal box full of electronic circuitry may sound a bit exaggerated, but embracing pinball like that is a physical experience. In fact to get there at all, you have to switch your brain right off. Take the combination shot. To do this successfully each flipper must react differently, but in precise interlocking coordination in time spaces of hundreths of a second. Simply the brain is much less efficient in these responses than the body.

Shut inside its glass, pinball has no consequence in the real world; by inserting a coin you can take possession of a small amount of time out. Humans are funny about time – peculiar almost; it is, I suspect, their ultimate security. What would happen with nothing to look forward to, nothing to look back on? Usually time is chopped into three bits, the bit that's gone, the bit that's here now and the bit that's coming. But there's another phase involved. It comes when there's a disassociation with the present – when we're bored or alienated. Put this together with having nothing in particular to look forward to, and nothing (or too much) to look back on, and time takes on a different feel. It drags and becomes an absolute, churning about between the ashtrays and the ketchup bottles, a commodity – The Passing Time. Before everybody starts reaching for the razors and turning on the gas taps, relax, pinball is here, pinball helps you through the night. At the same old rate, maybe, nevertheless it gets you from one point in time to another with the absolute minimum of tedium. Passing time is pinball's business. One minute you're sitting there bored senseless and then a little thought sparks across your brain – 'check out the pinball' – next minute, transformation, energy, action, lights, noise, exhileration.

If only pinball were not held in contempt as such a vile low-life activity, if only pinball had status. Pick up on the vision. Pinball could be everywhere, tube stations, lining the major traffic bound streets, in hospitals; there would be pinball in banks, on buses, down the dole office, in fact all over. The truly great thing about it, the better you play, the more replays you get, the more time goes by – marvellous. A Time Swallower – nothing less – where to win is to lose more time.

Mick Shepherd wrote a dissertation on pinball for his Sociology degree at Essex University.

STUDENTS

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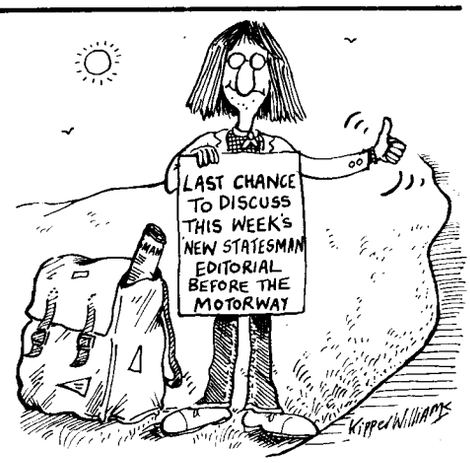

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Trumpet Vigorously

Musing away here in the bosky garden of 'Myrtlebank' (may-trees and laburnums in full glory, their colours skilfully non-clash: climbing roses just starting to burst), my thoughts sometimes wander back down memory's increasingly confused lanes to an area that is still sharp and clear in the mind, my prep school on the Hampshire coast. Sharp and clear in the nostrils too are the peculiar smells of the corridors' brown linoleum, the stoke-hole off the bathroom, the boot-room, and Matron's 'den'. It wasn't really a top-notch prep school, I'm afraid. I don't much go in for sour strictures of the past and I merely have a sense of wonderment that the school's many and strange imperfections should have been allowed to be. From lunch (1 p.m.) on, there was nothing whatever to eat but bread scraped with margarine, the dry and sulky hunks revealing the irritation of the skivvies, as we called them, who had unlovingly prepared this digestible treat. To make the hunks more interesting, we spread them with mustard. At evening prayers, a cup of some weak beef extract appeared, swiftly swallowed and usually in a state of great trepidation as prayer time was, unsuitably enough when all should have been forgiveness and amity, the moment chosen by the headmaster, at that moment of the day awash with whisky and peevishness, for picking on various victims and twisting their ears. At bedtime the hungrier boys ate their toothpaste. Nobody ran away. We hadn't the strength.

We were all issued (6d on the bill) with an improving little booklet called 'Self Helps to Self and Fitness' which aimed at producing both the mind serene and the body beautiful. After a foreword on the importance of regular habits, the opening sentence of the main body of the work ran: 'On waking, trumpet vigorously to clear nostrils.' 'To trumpet', we learned, meant to snort noisily outwards. The author was a master at the school, a wonky giant who taught French extremely well and added to this ability various unscheduled extras when opportunity presented itself. Whenever out in the open, he chose to trumpet and snuffle without benefit of handkerchief, finger and thumb to nose. I have seen others do this since and as a spectacle I haven't ever come to love it. With the aid of the Self Helps, we ran here, doubled there, threw this and held that, our minds sullenly unreceptive and by no means serene. We benefited, I don't doubt, bodily but I've never enjoyed being coerced into any violent physical movement, apart from those that come quite naturally such as running for a bus or nimbly dodging cars or playing Scrabble, and since leaving the school (it was 1924) and abandoning Self Helps, I've rather let that side of things slide.

However, the over-kind words recently directed at me in these pages have decided me to try to become more worthy and wholesome and vibrant and to take up again, late in the day though it may be, the search for physical perfection. I have had happy occasion before to speak gratefully of our literary editor, the last time being when, troubled about this and that, I was handed those sex volumes, the gist of which, as you'll remember, I was able to share with you and which, we all found, made so much that was obscure so clear. And now, troubled again, I have been handed *Total Fitness*, a glowingly recommended paperback (Mayflower Books, 75p) and of dual authorship, Lawrence E. Morehouse and Leonard Gross, who, in a preface, give grateful thanks to those human guinea-pigs who 'voluntarily exercised to exhaustion' in laboratories to establish the cheering news that a desirable level of 'fitness' can be yours without strain and sweat. The authors are, of course, American and make much use of the phrase 'to get in shape'. Well, I certainly have, like anybody else, a shape. So far, so good. And there is further comfort to be found. 'The best position for the shoulders is hanging loose to the sides.' Why, that's just exactly where mine are.

Though I am, I discover, an 'endomorph' (the dictionary gives 'a person of rounded build'), I prefer to ignore our authors when they talk about 'bouncing flab' and to concentrate on the less insulting and more thoughtful side of their deliberations. Callisthenics aimed at cultivating gracefulness and strength originated, we find, in Sweden in the last century, rich Swedish landowners finding the sight of their stooped and sagging peasants so offensive that they instigated physical drill (hence, I suppose, Swedish drill) to improve posture at the plough and in the barn (the stoopers and saggers were absurdly grateful, no doubt). And goodness me the physical myths that Messrs Morehouse and Gross encouragingly explode on all sides: there is no reason at all for abstinence and keeping off you-know-what before a competitive athletics fixture (indeed, you may perhaps fly even faster down the track), or for not eating before swimming (at the 1968 Olympics a young swimmer ate a sizeable hamburger with onions, four candy bars and drank a Coke and then broke her own world record, triumphing both over her rivals and her hiccoughs).

Once again I look the other way when our authors hammer on with their anti-obesity message ('you can see the fat hanging from your body in pendulous folds') and rejoin them when they are in sunnier mood and providing useful charts which demonstrate how many calories there are per food portion and what duration of exercise is necessary to get rid of them. Thus, to remove the effects of one fried egg and a baked potato I have to ski (downhill, thank God) for 20 minutes. For one pancake, it's a run (!) of seven minutes. If I lose my head completely and wolf down a plate of 'cereal', two tablespoons of sugar, some tinned tuna, and a rissole with French fried on the side, I must either play tennis for two hours or garden for three or do 'bowling' (surely not energetic enough?) for four. But here, as with so much in the book, there is a relatively easy way out. I note that 80 minutes of 'reclining in bed' removes 100 calories, and so, for the smallish snack mentioned above, I just slip between the sheets for five hours and I'm as good as new.

There's just so much else. Why not try the Fitness Hop to the rhythm of 'Tea for Two'? There's the 'Ask Yourself Who You Are!' section, a challenge to anybody. There's advice on the modish custom of 'jogging', which must in my case be on-the-spot jogging rather than at a slow lope through our village, where it would spread alarm and despondency. And anyway all through the day as we go about our normal round, we can be exercising. If there's a typewriter to be moved, 'welcome the opportunity'. Stand up, they advise, when you take all telephone calls. Spring about in general. At a conference, jump to your feet to make a point and 'pace about'. We're trying, you see, to restore and build up the muscles of our abdominal walls rather than build up our popularity. On returning home, 'treat yourself to some extravagant motions', such as 'yanking open all the kitchen cabinets'. Feverishly, while the calories fly off, 'polish a pan' or rearrange your library. Do all this and, it seems, with reasonable luck you will live longer, though I am in some doubt whether, in these circumstances, this is a sensible target to aim at.

Roger Woddis

The £9.95 Solution

In his book, Hitler's War, *David Irving says there is no written evidence that Hitler ordered the death of six million Jews.*

David Irving never swerved from honour,
Never soiled his nappies as a child,
Never nicked a toffee from the tuck-shop,
Never swore and hardly ever smiled:
Of all these suppositional events
We have no documentary evidence.

Nero shouldn't be condemned on hearsay,
Genghis Khan, accused of going ape,
Never pinned a notice to his tent-flap:
'Back in fifteen minutes – gone to rape.'
Did Homer pay a visit to the gents?
We have no documentary evidence.

After all the salient facts are sifted,
Certain stubborn questions still remain:
Was David stoned before he slew Goliath?
Where's the written proof that Bach
was sane?
And as for Irving's childlike innocence,
We have no documentary evidence.

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Letters to the Editor

The NS and the Jubilee

Sir, I read yesterday (in our local public library) the whole political content of your 'Anti-Jubilee number'. It would be very hard to beat it in the history of journalism, as an example of bilious writing. It beautifully illustrates the present bankruptcy of ideas of the Left. Realising that their theories of many years do not work, that they have no answers to unemployment and inflation (largely of their own creation), that nationalisation is a total flop, that the NHS has not produced the results confidently predicted, that welfare benefits are increasingly abused, they and you turn on one of the outstandingly successful parts of our constitution, the monarchy. You reprint the ill-informed opinions of schoolchildren. Does this reflect Labour fury that in spite of socialist propaganda and the vapourings of Mr William Hamilton, people still love and admire their Queen? How can the head of state (who is also head of the Commonwealth), in whose name all British governments act, pay tax and submit to the inquisitions of the Inland Revenue? The idea is logically nonsense. I was very critical of the Queen 25 years ago. I have learnt to respect her professionalism.

D J. CAMPBELL

60 Woodcote Valley Road
Purley, Surrey

Sir, Your recent Anti-Jubilee issue (NS 3 June) was an oasis of healthy scepticism amidst a nationwide desert of gullible credulity, and as such deserves only the highest praise. What a shame that so many of the following week's correspondents display an innocence towards the Royals that would be quaint were it not for the serious implications that it masks. Here are people of (supposedly) rational and free-thinking minds (apart from the masochistic element, this is surely why they buy and read the NS), yet they produce the same time-worn, but still naïve, objections that govern the minds of the Bernard Levins *et al.* of this world. The lesson to be drawn from this is obvious, at least to me – you have not been doing your job well enough! In future, each outraged Royalist should represent a direct and personal challenge, and I shall expect to see a flood of congratulatory and approving correspondence in the issue following the publication of your anti-Golden Jubilee edition.

FRANK M. KANE

47 Red Lion Street
London WC1

Sir, I was surprised to find that Mervyn Jones who, I presume, is a Welshman, like myself, is under the impression that the Queen is a descendant of 'Henry of Agincourt', and of 'the scheming and commanding first Elizabeth'. In regard to Elizabeth, there is no reason to believe that her subtitle of 'Virgin Queen' was not authentic, so she had no descendants. In regard to 'Henry of Agincourt', the fact is that the Queen is a descendant, not of Henry V, but of his widow, Catherine, who married Owen Tudor, a soldier of fortune from Anglesey, and they were the grandparents of Henry Tudor, who won the crown at Bosworth to become King Henry VII. Henry VII's daughter, Margaret Tudor, married James IV of Scotland, whose great-grandson, James VI of Scotland became James I of England. James I's grand-daughter, Sophia, married Ernest Augustus, Elector of Hanover, and their son became George I of England from whom our present Queen is directly descended.

If Mervyn Jones, whose work I have always admired, is a Welshman, I am sure he will be glad to be reminded that our fellow-countrymen, the Tudors, – Owen and King Henry VII – had key roles in all this, for it may well be that it is this trace of Welsh blood in our royalty that enabled Kenneth Morgan to inform NS readers last week that 'the Crown provides just the right amount of historical therapy to be tranquillising without being harmful'.

BRINLEY EVANS
Chairman, The Bosworth Society

2 Llwynon Road
Abertillery
Gwent

Sir, Like John Mortimer and the Queen, I am celebrating a 25th anniversary. As the Queen received the sad news at Treetops, I was finishing my O Levels and leaving school. Almost simultaneously I started reading the NEW STATESMAN, and set off on the slope from comfortable family Conservatism to eventual membership of the Labour Party and even parliamentary candidature in the balmy days of 1966. In those 25 years, the NEW STATESMAN has been a stimulant, an irritant, mostly a pleasure to read, from London to Nairobi, Gaborone to Geneva. However, in that time I have not read an issue so artificial, so cranky, so pointless as that of 3 June.

Only one point deserves serious consideration. There will soon be six direct members of the Queen's family available to perform. All other members of the entourage, except the Queen Mother, should be removed from the Civil List and become self-supporting. If the Queen does not have the sense to arrange this, the next prime minister who has time to bother about it should do so.

IAN HAMILTON

5 Avenue de Miremont
1206 Geneva

Sir, Let me congratulate you on your Anti-Jubilee number. Thanks to the BBC (*mirabile dictu*!) mentioning it in the *Today* programme, I bought a copy of the NS specially. I am an Anglican priest, but I do not think it necessary for an Anglican priest to be a monarchist. If the Jubilee is carefully analysed it is seen to be a very hollow celebration, but of great delight to the Establishment. It is not far removed from Queen worship! The monarchy is surrounded by far too much secrecy and by far too large a household. As exemplified in this country, it is out of date. I would like to see the Queen attend a miners' gala, as Mr Hamilton suggests in his book, and I would also like to see much more informality surrounding the monarchy.

R. S. HAINES

4 Spencer Road
Ryde
Isle of Wight

Sir, No, I don't think the monarchy should be above criticism. I don't hold with the pseudo-religiosity which infects some people's attitude whenever they talk about the Queen. But your Anti-Jubilee number just won't do. Some of it is fair comment, particularly your own article on the Crown and the C of E. But much of it is vicious and grossly unfair, notably the profile of the Duke of Edinburgh. I think he sometimes says silly things – as some of your writers do – but that doesn't justify the venom of the article. Anyhow, if the monarchy is so beneath contempt, as some of your writers imply, why waste a whole number on it? On the question of its cost, I refer you to the much more balanced statement in the *Observer* of 5 June.

Well let's hope that you've got your anti-royal bile out of your system and that you can concentrate on more important subjects, and leave us alone to wave our flags with a good conscience, if we wish to.

PAUL KELLY

Christ Church Vicarage
Ottershaw
Chertsey, Surrey

Sir, Well, it's eye-catching to have an Anti-Jubilee number, but James Fenton's heading was wrong. He didn't explain why they hate the Queen. He merely revealed that some nine-year-olds do, and what one wants to know is: who taught them to? (What, by the way are nine-year-olds doing in an infant school?) If it is the 'working-class homes' that are teaching nine-year-olds hatred, based on envy, then it is time the working class examined the credentials of those who shape its ideas. If it is the school, then it is time the inspectorate moved in, and somebody was moved out. The dull and dreary fact is that every state has to have a head of state, and you can either have a colourful and expensive one or a colourless and expensive one; or indeed a dangerous and expensive one. Several names spring to mind.

W. S. BROWNLIE
Information Officer
Scottish Schoolmasters Association
19 Hunterhill Road
Paisley

Sir, I am always slightly puzzled by calls in the press for the Royal Family to reveal their finances to the public. I would have thought that *everyone's* financial affairs should be private. It is debatable, for instance, whether wills should be published in the newspapers – surely they are the private business of the family concerned only. To my mind the only reason for making a family's financial affairs public would be if there were suspicion, with good reason, of criminality.

DAVID EALEY

6 Marine Avenue
Leigh-on-Sea
Essex

Sir, The tone and content of your Jubilee number really saddened me. Have the English intellectuals sunk so low that not one professional could muster one coherent, meaningful, decent argument or article on his chosen topic? This ghastliness I can understand (the psychology is well enough known): it is the insult to the mentality of your readers which is less forgiveable.

JOHN HUGHES

11 Nibancho
Chiyoda-ku
Japan

Sir, While I would have liked to see something more explicit on the political views of individual members of the Royal Family and their sycophantic retinue, congratulations on your Anti-Jubilee number. Long may you reign over us.

KEITH THOMAS

11 Myrtle Road
Bristol

Sir, The Anti-Jubilee number was extremely boring and, by the public acclaim of the monarchy, has been emphatically refuted.

SUSAN HUGHES-ONSLOW

32 Godfrey Street
London SW3

Sir, May I suggest that when the next Jubilee or equivalent comes round you ignore the occasion totally? I think you would be doing

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your readers a great service. It is the subject matter of Jubilee numbers that tires, not the standpoint.

DAVID J. K. HALLIDAY

20 Harefield Road
London SE4

Sir, I've read the NS for about 20 years, and think your Anti-Jubilee number is the best yet! The only time I recall something better was an editorial about the monarchy early this year.

J. JOYCE

32 Sussex Square
Brighton

Mousetrapped in Seoul

Sir, Murray Sayle's interesting article on Korea (NS 10 June) contains two formulations which deserve clarification. First, in the context of the combat experience of the South Korean armed forces, he writes: 'Some 50,000 Koreans fought in Vietnam.' In fact, South Korea maintained 50,000 troops in Vietnam at a given period, but the total number who fought in Vietnam was 312,000. In other words, almost half the armed forces had combat experience there – not the less than 10 per cent which Sayle's figure would imply.

Second, Sayle writes that '. . . it has been a Japanese, not an American, interest the Americans have been defending all along. Korea is the classical invasion route to Japan'. It is a pity to see Sayle regurgitating this classical Japanese mystification. Saying that Korea is the classical invasion route to Japan is a bit like saying that Switzerland is the classical invasion route to Paraguay. When was Japan last invaded by, or through, Korea? Certainly not in the last 2,500 years. On the contrary, it is Korea which has been invaded by Japan, and used by Japan as an invasion route to the continent of Asia. The countries which have been invaded via Korea are China and Russia – and by Japan. This is one point. But an even more important one is that the Korean people cannot be made responsible in any way for the misdeeds or distorted (self-) 'interests' of the Japanese Government, today any more than yesterday.

JON HALLIDAY

Korea Committee
6 Endsleigh Street
London WC1

Scotland and the BBC

Sir, Alastair Hetherington (NS 10 June) may feel happy about the increasing number of programmes produced by BBC Scotland, but to the many Scots who dread above all else the words 'And at this time Scottish viewers will get their own programme', the reaction will be one of apprehension and gloom. Viewers and listeners south of the border have little idea of what we poor home-Scots have to suffer at the hands of BBC Scotland. The quality of Scottish-produced programmes is generally abysmal. Mr Hetherington admits only that in current affairs his journalists are cautious and sycophantic; he should understand that a prime reason for this could be the twee and cosy strand of society all his 'investigators' seem to come from. People who have as much to do with contemporary Scotland as Billy Connolly has to do with cucumber sandwiches and croquet on the lawn. And where on earth does Mr Hetherington get the idea that his company has achieved quality in their recent drama output – *Sutherland's Law* and *The Mackinnons*? He must be joking. The drama of a dour, crusty Scottish vet worrying about his sister-in-law selling her highland estate must have them rushing home to watch in Castle-milk. Still, one can always compensate for the lack of any intelligent content with lovely pictures of hills and glens; it is significant that both series were set in the afore-mentioned hills and glens of West Scotland. The award winning *Just Another Saturday* was accepted by London BBC after being refused by Glasgow.

Light entertainment is usually *The Good Old Days* in tartan, and in their sports coverage BBC Scotland obviously feel they can get away with the blatant chauvinism and anglophobia they would dearly love to indulge in at all times. A Martian landing in Scotland and watching BBC Scotland for a week before returning home (and who could blame him?) would take back the information that the Scots were a sporting super-race denied their true status by flukey goals, biased refereeing, dreadful luck with injuries, and jealous persecution by 'the English'.

But it is not only the parochialism of BBC Scotland which distresses Scots of good sense and objectivity; it is the philistine form the parochialism often takes. To give one example: we rarely get the nightly arts programme from Radio 4 *Kaleidoscope*. If Hetherington's mob can find anything prosaic and boring to put in its place, they'll do it; last week it was a nightly report on the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. To give another example: instead of Radio 4's intelligent Saturday evening talk-programme *Stop the Week* we get Scottish dance music. Anyone comparing the English edition of the *Radio Times* with the Scottish will find many more examples.

Better still, why doesn't the NEW STATESMAN send a television and radio critic to Scotland for a week, with the brief to comment only on Scottish-produced programmes? Don't take Alastair Hetherington's word (or mine) for anything.

JOHN MACKAY

Strathray Cottages
Kintore, Inverurie
Aberdeenshire

Blind Blues

Sir, Mr Charles Fox is a critic, so I am assured. As such, he has an obligation to the truth, or at least factual accuracy. In his short piece on *All You Need Is Love*, however, I have counted 24 inaccuracies, most too asinine for repetition, but some too shabby for me to pass without correction.

Viz: I left out Gershwin, Miller and Dylan. Please see episodes 8 and 12, Mr Fox. *Porgy and Bess* was not mentioned. See episode 5. No one said it was Marie Lloyd singing; nor did Rudi Blesh ascribe *Calliope Rag* to Scott Joplin; every date referring to the publication of a particular composition in Swing was correct, according to ASCAP; there were not 16 experts (Mr Fox can't even count); Lefty Diz is not an obscure guitarist; I did not once use a 'fish-eye' lens; there were no Twenties flappers charlestoning to a cakewalk; no one said Brian Epstein committed suicide; and if *Treemonisha* is 'not good enough to break your heart over', well, it certainly finished off Scott Joplin. Nor was there a programme which purported to give a 'run-down' on jazz, any more than there was a programme which gave a 'run-down' on blues. A 'run-down' was not the point, which even a critic with a 'zest for higher education' might have noticed.

Still, I am glad Mr Fox liked the series, an affection which I do not, in the circumstances, take as a compliment. It is clear to me he did not watch it.

TONY PALMER

4 Kensington Park Gardens
London W11

CHARLES FOX *writes*: Nothing bores the readership so much as quibbling over minutiae which is why my review proffered only a tiny selection of the solecisms that bespattered Tony Palmer's TV series. He is at least gracious enough to concede two of them (Marie Lloyd jr and *Calliope Rag*). How quaint, incidentally, to affix publishing rather than performing dates to those film-clips. Does that explain why the excerpt from *Hollywood Hotel*, filmed in 1937 but labelled 'Benny Goodman's Swing Band 1934', had the musicians performing *Sing, Sing, Sing*, a tune I always imagined that Louis Prima wrote in 1936?

From the Zulu Front

Sir, May I comment on a couple of statements in the review (NS 10 June) of my book *The Red Soldier*? Referring to Buller's mounted volunteers, who fought the Zulus with such ferocity, Julian Symons says 'it is a pity that there are no letters here from any of these tough semi-mercenaries'. In fact I print three letters from men of the Frontier Light Horse, written by Metcalf Smith, D'Arcy, and Blaine (pages 166-71). Given that the unit was only 100-strong by the end of the war, it is a fair showing. As to their quality, D'Arcy's makes the best reading, but I do not think they are in the champagne-period class that Mr Symons expects of them: a dash of Cape brandy, perhaps, but that is common enough in the 'conventional' letters, too.

Again, I doubt if in general the editors of newspapers who printed the soldiers' letters did much in the way of excising any 'awkward comments'. Many papers published letters from men who witnessed or participated in the British savageries after beating off the Zulus at Kambula (pp. 169-74), Gingindhlovu (pp. 202-5), and Ulundi (pp. 233-7). Their descriptions of the slaughter of wounded Zulus during the pursuit was evidence of such atrocities, and caused quite a furore in the Liberal press and beyond it.

FRANK EMERY

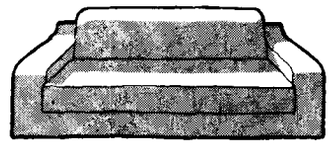
St Peter's College
Oxford

Humbug and Health

Sir, In your issue of 10 June Donald Gould states: 'Somewhere between two and three thousand years ago a psalmist suggested that the proper life span for a man amounted to three score years and ten, and that since that time . . . the figure has remained very much the same.' Whatever the psalmist suggested, the fact is that man's mean life span is probably more than *three times* what it was then, and certainly not very much the same. Tobacco, etc. have done their worst but Dr Gould's predecessors and modern hygiene have been more than a match for them.

DOUGLAS BOLTON

20 Reynolds Close
London NW11



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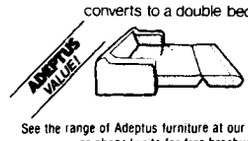

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John Fairbairn

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SUMMER BOOKS

Clive James

As a Matter of Tact

Responses: Prose Pieces 1953-1976 by RICHARD WILBUR *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich* £7.10

There is nothing surprising in the fact that the most intelligent, fastidious and refined of contemporary American poets should produce intelligent, fastidious and refined prose, but it does no harm to have the likelihood confirmed. This collection of Richard Wilbur's critical writings is an immediate pleasure to read. Beyond that, the book provides an absorbing tour of Wilbur's preoccupations, which admirers of his poetry had already guessed to be of high interest. Beyond that again, there is the harsh matter, steadily becoming more urgent, of whether or not the study of literature is killing literature.

In America, the place where crises burst first, it has long been apparent that the output of critical works from the universities, most of them uttered by student teachers fatally combining intellectual mediocrity and wetness behind the ears, has reached the proportions of an ecological disaster. Yet here is one book, written by a Professor of English at Wesleyan University, which would have to be saved from the holocaust if President Carter were to take the sensible step of rationalising his energy programme by ordering all academic writings on the subject of English literature to be fed directly to the flames, thereby ensuring that useless books, inflated from only slightly less useless doctoral theses, would find at least a semblance of creative life by providing enough electric power to light a pig-sty, if only for a few seconds.

But then Wilbur is no ordinary professor. His university career has really been a kind of monastic hideaway, where he has been able to hole up and contemplate his principal early experience, which was the second world war in Europe. Military service was Wilbur's first university. If for ever afterwards he was a writer in residence, at least he was writing about something that he had seen in the outside world. In the deceptively elegant symmetries of Wilbur's early poetry could be detected a pressure of awareness which amply warranted his retreat to the cloisters.

While his contemporaries held the mirror up to chaos, Wilbur took the opposite line: the more extreme the thing contained, the more finely-wrought the container had to be. Berryman and Lowell went in for stringy hair, open-necked shirts, non-rhyming sonnets that multiplied like bacilli, and nervous breakdowns. Wilbur, on the other hand, looked like an advertisement for Ivy League tailoring and turned out poems built like Fabergé toy trains. I think there is a case for arguing that by the time the Sixties rolled around Wilbur had cherished his early experience too long for the good of his work, which in his later volumes is simply indecisive. But earlier on he was not indecisive at all – just indirect, which is a different thing. The poems in *The Beautiful Changes*, *Ceremony* and *Things of This World* sound better and better as time goes on. Where his coevals looked fecund, they now look slovenly; where he once seemed merely exquisite, he now seems a model of judicious strength; as was bound to happen, it was the artful contrivance which retained its spontaneity and the avowedly spontaneous which ended up looking contrived. There is no reason to be ashamed at feeling charmed by Wilbur's poetry. The sanity of his level voice is a hard-won triumph of the contemplative intelligence.

Selected from 20 years of occasional prose, the essays and addresses collected in *Responses* combine conciseness with resonance, each of them wrapping up its nominal subject while simultaneously raising all the relevant general issues – the best kind of criticism for a student to read. A lecture like 'Round About a Poem of Housman's' could be put into a beginner's hands with some confidence that it would leave him wiser than before, instead of merely cockier. Previously available only in that useful anthology *The Moment of Poetry*, the piece gains from being set among others from the same pen. It is an excellent instance of close reading wedded to hard thinking. The general statements are as tightly focused as the specific observations, which from so sensitive a reader are very specific indeed. By attending patiently to Housman's delicately judged tones of voice in 'Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries', Wilbur is able to show that the contempt superficially evinced for the hired soldiers is meant to imply an underlying respect. The casual reader might miss this not just through being deaf to poetry, but through being deaf to meaning in general. 'A tactful person is one who understands not merely what is said, but also what is meant.' But meaning is not confined to statements: in fact the sure way to miss the point of Housman's poem is to do a practical criticism that confines itself to paraphrase. A song like 'It's Only A Paper Moon' and a poem like 'Dover Beach' can be paraphrased in exactly the same way. (This seemingly off-hand illustration is typical of Wilbur's knack for the perfect example.) It follows that meaning embraces not just statement but sound, pacing, diction. Thus the subject expands to include questions of why poetry is written the way it is. How much can the poet legitimately expect the reader to take in?

Yeats, for example, overdoes his allusions in 'King and No King'. It is one thing for Milton to expect you to spot the reference to the *Aeneid* when Satan wakes in Hell, but another for Yeats to expect you to know a bad play by Beaumont and Fletcher. For one thing, you can see what Milton means even if you have never read Virgil, whereas Yeats's point seems not to be particularly well made even when you have Beaumont and Fletcher at your fingertips – in fact pride at being in possession of such information is likely to colour your judgment. (Says Wilbur, who *did* possess such information, and whose judgment *was* coloured.)

It is worth pausing at this juncture to say that in a few paragraphs Wilbur has not only raised, but to a large extent settled, theoretical points which more famous critical savants have pursued to the extent of whole essays. In *Lectures in America* Dr Leavis argues, with crushing intransigence, that Yeats's poetry needs too much ancillary apparatus to explain it, so that when you get right down to it there are only two poems in Yeats's entire *oeuvre* which earn the status of a 'fully achieved thing'. Wilbur takes the same point exactly as far as it should be taken, which is nowhere near as far. Possessing tact himself, he can see Yeats's lack of it, but correctly supposes this to be a local fault, not a typical one. If Dr Leavis is unable to consider such a possibility, perhaps it might be of interest to Professor Donoghue, who in a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books* was to be heard complaining about Yeats's limitations at some length. It is a bit steep when an academic who devotes half his life to a dead poet starts doubting the poet's merits instead of questioning the effects of his own bookishness.

As for Wilbur's reference to Milton, well, it is very relevant to some of the positions adopted by Dr Steiner, whose important gift of transmitting his enthusiasm for the culture of the past seriously overstepped itself in Milton's case. Perhaps goaded by the misplaced self-confidence of a student generation who not only knew nothing about the history of civilisation but had erected their doltishness into an ideology, Dr Steiner declared that you couldn't tell what was going on in *Paradise Lost* unless you were intimate with the classical literature to which Milton was alluding. Wilbur's fleeting look at this very topic helps reminds us that Dr Steiner got it wrong two ways at once. If you *did* have to know about those things, then Milton would not deserve his reputation. But you *don't* have to know, since the allusions merely reinforce what Milton is tactful enough to make plain.

Such matters are important to criticism and crucial to pedagogy. For all Dr Steiner's good intentions, it is easy to imagine students being scared off if they are told that they can't hope to read an English poet without first mastering classical literature.

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Michael Joseph

Wilbur's approach, while being no less concerned about the universality of culture, at least offers the ignoramus some hope. Anyway, Wilbur simply happens to be right: poets allude to the past (his essay 'Poetry's Debt to Poetry' shows that all revolutions in art are palace revolutions) but if they are original at all then they will make their first appeal on a level which demands of the reader no more than an ability to understand the language. Which nowadays is demanding a lot, but let that pass.

'Poetry and Happiness' is another richly suggestive piece of work. Wilbur talks of a primitive desire that is radical to poetry, 'the desire to lay claim to as much of the world as possible through uttering the names of things'. Employing the same gift for metaphysical precision which he demonstrates elsewhere in his essay on Emily Dickinson, Wilbur is able to show what forms this desire usually takes and how it affects the poet's proverbial necessity to 'find himself'. I don't think it is too facetious to suggest that this might be a particularly touchy subject for Wilbur. Complaining about the lack of unity in American culture, he seems really to be talking about his own difficulties in writing about the American present with the same unforced originality – finding yourself – which marked his earlier poems about Europe.

In the following essay, a fascinating piece (indispensable for the student of his poems) called 'On My Own Work', he rephrases the complaint as a challenge. 'Yet the incoherence of America need not enforce a stance of alienation on the poet: rather, it may be seen as placing on him a peculiar imaginative burden.' It is a nice point whether Wilbur has ever really taken that burden up. I am inclined to think that he has not, and that the too-typical quietness of his later work ('characteristic', in the sense Randall Jarrell meant when he decided that Wallace Stevens had fallen to copying himself) represents a great loss to all of us. But we ought to learn to be appropriately grateful for what we have been given, before we start complaining about what has been taken away.

'It is one mark of the good critic', Wilbur observes, 'that he abstains from busywork.' Except for the essays on Poe, which tend to the repetitive, this whole collection has scarcely a superfluous sentence. When Wilbur's critical sense lapses, it is usually through kindness. He makes as good a case as can be made for Theodore Roethke's openness to influence, calling admirable what he should see to be crippling. But even full-time critics can be excused for an occasional disinclination to tell the cruel truth, and on the whole this is a better book of criticism than we can logically expect a poet to come up with. If there is a gulf between English and American literature in modern times, at least there are some interesting bridges over it. The critical writings produced by some of the best American poets form one of those bridges. Tate, Berryman, Jarrell, John Peale Bishop, Edmund Wilson – those among them who were primarily critics were still considerable poets, and those among them who were primarily poets have yet managed to produce some of the most humane criticism we possess. With this superlative book, Richard Wilbur takes a leading place among their number.

Claire Tomalin

Millionaire

The Diary of Virginia Woolf Vol. 1 1915-1919 edited by Anne Olivier Bell *Hogarth Press* £8.50

Writers are not expected to be happy. The penalties of their attempts on fame are often taken to be emotional disorder, gloom, lassitude. The surprise of this first volume of Virginia Woolf's complete diary is that it brims with happiness; and it's not just that she had an archangel in the house to spread his protective wings about her – indeed, her few tiffs with Leonard are caused by his concern that she should not attend too many parties or give up her servants too readily to her sister. Her happiness in these years seems to run through and through the entire fabric of her life: 'But then I am happy . . . every virtue should be natural to the happy, since they are the millionaires of the race.' The volume ends with the words, 'I daresay we're the happiest couple in England.' It does look as though the routine they established – retreats to Sussex, months in London, the round of visits from friends, gossip, the garden and enjoyment of the seasons, discreet praise of one another's work and then, more than anything, the work itself – contained almost every ingredient of happiness.

She was not a night diarist; 'casual half-hours after tea' were her time. The entries are irregular, following certain ebbs and flows of mood and moves from Asheham to Richmond and back, catching up after a Garsington weekend, consciously selecting weighty topics at times – such as what her cousin H. A. L. Fisher, in the Government, had to say about the last stages of the war – or settling down to consider her friends as gravely as an anatomist; but more often sweeping up 'accidentally several stray matters which I should exclude if I hesitated, but which are the diamonds of the dustheap'. On occasion she grows querulous about a slight, or a fancied one; but beneath all there is a woman of force and self-confidence at work in these notebooks.

Philip Morrell told her she was 'heartless and terrifying'; some of her cruelties may arise from the very robust assertion of her own current state of health and achievement. She meditates a good deal on success and, although there are token remarks about her own lack of it, she knew her quality; it pleased her to be in demand as a reviewer and praised as a novelist. Success, she says, commenting coolly on the marital and professional failure of a friend, is 'an attitude of mind – the way one looks at life'. Noticing a dead horse on the pavement, she sees the pathos from a characteristic angle: 'to die in Oxford Street one

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hot afternoon, *& to have been only a van horse.*' In her enjoyment of her good fortune at not being a van horse, she sometimes sounds brutal: 'I'm a little doubtful, when I find a cheap ready made young woman out of an office in Oxford and lodging in Harrow, enthusiastic about Robinson Crusoe.' Seen through her own abundant leafiness, Katherine and John Middleton Murry are 'leafless trees'. Most chilling is a remark made on passing a long line of imbeciles on the towpath at Kingston:

> The first was a very tall young man, just queer enough to look twice at, but no more; the second shuffled, & looked aside; & then one realised that every one in that long line was a miserable ineffective shuffling idiotic creature, with no forehead, or no chin, & an imbecile grin, or a wild suspicious stare. It was perfectly horrible. They should certainly be killed.

Brilliant, disquieting description: brave of the editor to leave this as it was written (though one would expect no less from an editor so exact and illuminating). Brave of Mrs Woolf too, to let the thought come, with the awareness of her own half-sister Laura shut up somewhere, as well as her own private affliction.

Yet Virginia Woolf's diary is not her 'friend', as Katherine Murry's journal was hers. Pressed by Ottoline Morrell, Virginia confessed to having no 'inner life'. She is not much given to self-complicity and layings-bare, more inclined to the brisk and comic. Indeed there are many scenes of pure, almost dramatic comedy: an over-conversational Desmond MacCarthy eased out of the house with an expedient fib about the cook's sister coming to stay; Beatrice Webb proposing a scheme whereby children's building blocks should be 'inscribed with the names of organisations so that in putting them together they would learn their civic duties' (but why, Virginia asks herself, is there this 'half carping half humorously cynical view which steals into one's description of the Webbs'?). Or there is Ottoline, wonderfully complaining that no one *really* falls in love nowadays – except Bertie, whose choice is so often unfortunate – while Virginia mildly protests that romantic love is not the only kind, and the sensible Newnham socialist, Molly Hamilton, interposes helpfully that *she* loves the Independent Labour Party.

Virginia can mock herself too, for her 'suburban' attitude in resenting unacknowledged letters and Christmas presents. She knows she is a snob, deplores her own malice when it produces a backlash, chides herself for pride in her own subtlety of mind. Only once or twice she seems blankly unaware of the absurdity of what she says:

Among this week's contributors:

CLIVE JAMES's most recent books are *Visions Before Midnight* (Cape) and *Fan-Mail* (Faber).

MICHAEL DUANE was formerly head of Risinghill Comprehensive. He was one of the founders of the A. S. Neill Trust, and now works in teachers' training.

NICHOLAS BETHELL is the author of *The Last Secret* (1974).

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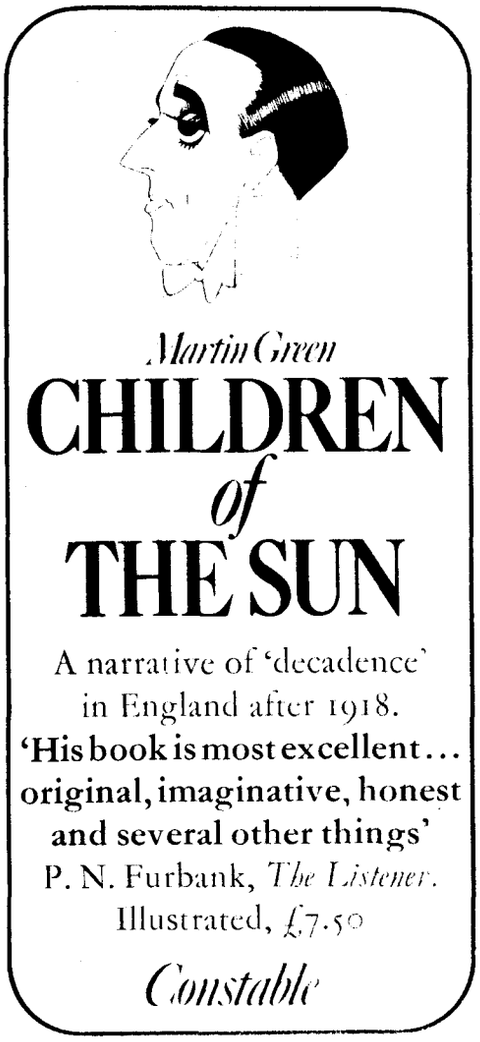
apropos Murry, 'I don't like couples where the husband admires the wife's work immensely'; or her straightfaced account of Desmond MacCarthy and Leonard looking up the word f— together in the London Library and being 'saddened' to find the thumbprints of many earlier researchers on the page of the dictionary.

The diary, so much more direct and condensed, is more enjoyable even than the letters. There is little about her work (and most of these remarks were published long ago in Leonard Woolf's selection, *A Writer's Diary*), much about the outward state of her life, walks and weather – bad, like being inside a balloon, she said, good in the autumn when they went for mushrooms or blackberries under the downs, or in May ('teeming, amorous & creative' month) when they might eat out with fallen apple blossom under their feet. At Easter in 1919 she wrote modestly about her reasons for writing the diary: 'It loosens the ligaments.'

> What sort of a diary should I like mine to be? Something loose knit, & yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace any thing, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes into my mind. I should like it to resemble some deep old desk, or capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds & ends without looking them through. I should like to come back, after a year or two, & find that the collection had sorted itself & refined itself & coalesced, as such deposits so mysteriously do, into a mould, transparent enough to reflect the light of our life, & yet steady, tranquil composed with the aloofness of a work of art.

Happy prediction from a millionaire of the race.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Blue Moon

Rodgers and Hart: Bewitched, Bothered and Bedevilled by SAMUEL MARX and JAN CLAYTON *W. H. Allen* £4.95

Thou Swell, Thou Witty: The Life and Lyrics of Lorenz Hart edited with a memoir by Dorothy Hart *Harper and Row* £18.75

Richard Rodgers enjoyed his greatest financial and popular success in the years after 1943 when he dropped his partner of 24 years and began his phenomenal association with Oscar Hammerstein II. But assessments of his reputation consistently attach a greater importance to that earlier partnership – very much to Rodgers's annoyance, one infers. Alec Wilder, for instance, in his authoritative *American Popular Music*, says:

> Though he wrote great songs with Oscar Hammerstein II, it is my belief that his greatest melodic invention and pellucid freshness occurred during his years of collaboration with Lorenz Hart. The inventiveness never ceased. Yet something bordering on musical complacency evidenced itself in his later career. I have always felt that there was an almost feverish demand in Hart's writing which reflected itself in Rodgers's melodies as opposed to the almost too comfortable armchair philosophy in Hammerstein's lyrics.

As if trying to deny the obvious distinction between his Hart and Hammerstein periods, Rodgers claims in his contribution to Dorothy Hart's innocuous symposium that Hart's words

> were clever . . . sardonic at times . . . never mean . . . often very funny . . . And more often than people realise today they were sentimental. As a matter of fact, the big hits of Larry's that still live today were his sentimental songs.

Maybe. But nobody wrote of *South Pacific* that 'the lyrics, the rhymes of which are less internal than colonic . . . have a peculiar, even for Broadway, nastiness of flavour', which is what Dorothy Parker said of *America's Sweetheart* (1929), wherein Hart wrote that:

> With my John and my Max
> I can reach a climax
> That's proof positive
> That a lady must live!
> If she's not a cold-blooded person,
> What's a girl to do?
> But if I looked like Aimée MacPherson,
> I'd be a good girl, too.

And no one said about *The Sound of Music*, 'although expertly done, can you draw sweet water from a foul well?', which Brooks Atkinson asked in the *New York Times* after *Pal Joey* (1940), a show that had to be laundered for the West End in 1954 and which has lyrics (e.g. 'Our Little Den of Iniquity') that Hart's sister-in-law cannot bring herself to print. There are other things she cannot bring herself to print – most notably the well-documented revelation that gives the Marx-Clayton book what little value it has, that Larry Hart was an active, deeply distressed homosexual. They do not use this knowledge to much effect, but it is by no means unimportant to an understanding of Hart's life and art.

To say that Rodgers and Hart were both stage-struck middle-class New York Jews who studied at Columbia University is to exhaust what they had in common in a single sentence. Rodgers emerges from these books, as from his own and other memoirs, as a dull conscientious craftsman whom everyone respects and few love. The son of a prosperous, eminently respectable physician, he married young, lived a temperate, well-organised social and professional life. Hart on the other hand was a mercurial manic-depressive, generous, lovable, profligate. He was obsessed with his diminutive stature (under five feet tall even with elevator shoes) and outsize head, and convinced that no one could really love him – and for that reason, some believe (though it's merely conjecture), was driven into alcoholism and homosexuality. Mabel Mercer called him 'the saddest man I ever knew' and the name that constantly crops up when people recall him is Toulouse-Lautrec, though Shakespeare's Puck is often mentioned too. (Mickey Rooney, incidentally, a favourite performer of the lyricist's, played Puck in Reinhardt's movie and impersonated Hart in *Words and Music*.)

In sharp contrast to Rodgers's father, Hart Senior was a colourful entrepreneur, constantly just a few yards ahead of the law who hung out with Tammany Hall fixers and the notorious Polly ('A House is Not a Home') Adler. Lorenz Hart's constant companion was one Milton 'Doc' Bender, a true Doc Holliday type, being also a retired dentist, pimp, gambler and orgiast. Unlike other homosexuals of his acquaintance (Cole Porter and Noël Coward, for instance), Hart was consumed with guilt and incapable of forming any long-term attachment. Quite literally a closet queen, he would apparently leave the bed of his young lovers and be found in the mornings curled up on a closet floor, and he installed sound-proof doors in his beloved mother's room so that she would not hear his nocturnal carousing. Clearly the wistful quality of his romantic numbers, their defensive, bruised feeling, comes from this predicament. Equally his sexual predilections and compulsive taste for the low-life help explain the peculiar resonance of *Pal Joey* – that Hart could identify both with the 'half-pint imitation' that is the seedy gigolo Joey Evans and with the rich, randy middle-aged woman who is 'Bewitched' by him.

Presented in this way the lyricist and his composer are almost too strikingly complementary. However, that is the way they were, and together from the early Twenties to Hart's untimely death at the age of only 48 they wrote a body of imperishable songs and transformed the American stage musical, extending its range, integrating music, book and dance as never

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before, and taking it to several of its peaks, including possibly its very highest one in *Pal Joey*.

Hart's pathetic end came in 1943 when he contracted pneumonia after, contrary to Rodgers' instructions, he had been admitted to the first night of a Broadway revival of their *Connecticut Yankee* and had been dragged drunk from the theatre after nearly ruining the performance of his last great song 'To Keep My Love Alive'. He knew then that Rodgers was bound to pursue his collaboration with Hammerstein after the triumphant opening of *Oklahoma!*, a project he'd refused to work on – almost certainly because he found it altogether too wholesome a piece of family entertainment. His dying words were 'What have I lived for?', a good song title, though a trifle strident – better suited perhaps to Gilbert Bécaud than to Hart himself.

The temptation in writing about Rodgers and Hart is to elevate the latter and downgrade the former. Hart's lyrics are brilliant – witty, moving, precise. His peers are Gilbert and, at their best, Coward, Porter and Frank Loesser. He was something of a genius, as well as being perceptive and even wise. Beside him Rodgers is a pale figure, a conformist who became the court musician of the Eisenhower era. Yet even on paper, where they read well, Hart's lyrics don't exist without Rodgers's music. If you know the tune, they start singing themselves to you.

Because one doesn't know the tunes, the rarely performed songs that Dorothy Hart has selected seem less good than the familiar work. I wonder for instance what someone would make of this little-known second encore to the early number 'Mountain Greenery' if he didn't know the tune:

In a mountain greenery
Where God paints the scenery
With the world we haven't a quarrel.
Here a girl can map her own
Life without a chaperone.
It's so good it must be immoral.
It's not amiss
To sit and kiss.
For me and you
There are no blue laws.
Life is more delectable
When it's disrespectable.
Bless our mountain greenery home.

On the technical side and the old 'what came first, music or lyrics?' question, the answer appears to be that the starting point was usually a title, followed by the music and finally the lyrics, though often Hart would produce a dummy lyric containing the formal skeleton and parodic words. The most difficult blues to which Hart ever gave birth was one of his simplest and most popular songs, *Blue Moon*. There are four quite different sets of lyrics, all composed while Rodgers and Hart were working for MGM in Hollywood. The first set was for an awful thing called 'Prayer' for an abandoned Jean Harlow movie. Next came a rejected title number for the 1933 gangster film *Manhattan Melodrama* and then a torch song entitled 'The Bad in Ev'ry Man' that was actually sung in that picture (and thus became the last piece of music that John Dillinger heard on this earth). Finally came the words we know, a rare occasion in which a lyric wasn't supplied for a specific dramatic context.

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Alan Ryan

The Leisure of the Theory Class

Part of My Life by A. J. AYER *Collins* £6.95

Some time in the middle 1950s, *Encounter* published an alphabetical guide to current intellectual phenomena. From those distant schooldays only one entry has fixed itself in my memory, and that is the entry under 'L'.

> L is for Logical Positivist,
> Ayer-y, Hume-y,
> Slightly gloomy
> Logical Positivist.

If my memory is accurate, that entry was written by the ignorant as well as for the ignorant. Leaving aside all philosophical controversy about the propriety of linking Hume's inquest into the workings of the mind and the twentieth-century obsession with problems of meaning – it is an assimilation which has Professor Ayer's blessing at all events – the fact remains that few philosophers have ever displayed the sheer high spirits, and the uninhibited pleasure in argument, that make Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* and Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* such fun to read.

I have the pleasantest memories of first coming across *Language, Truth and Logic*. I was lent it by an unusually enlightened schoolmaster one day, and had it confiscated by a somewhat less enlightened colleague the next – and I don't *think* that was an occasion when I was surreptitiously reading the refutation of metaphysics and theology beneath the desk while I ought to have been attending to the journeys of St Paul. The English public school of 1956 seemed oddly frightened of empiricism – my housemaster couldn't think why anyone might want to read *On Liberty*, while the chaplain thought that Russell's fourth marriage plainly discredited his views on the existence of God – but I suppose the prospect of the average obstreperous 16-year-old becoming addicted to the emotive theory of ethics must have seemed pretty terrifying. The so-called 'boo-hooray' analysis is an unnerving weapon in the hands of the naïve – 'Wrong, Sir? all you mean is "smoking in the lavatories, Boo", Sir'. You need more time and patience than most of us possess to show just why the analysis of moral judgments as expressions of emotion won't do.

Language, Truth and Logic doesn't feature particularly prominently in Freddie Ayer's account of his first 36 years – he notes its extraordinary success, with well over a quarter of a million copies sold in America alone, but doesn't venture an opinion about its merits as compared with his subsequent work. It was, he agrees, not original in anything but details, and not so much bold as brazen in the number of issues it carved its way through; none the less, it still seems to have been written in the right spirit and along the right lines. But *Part of My Life* is only in passing concerned with philosophical issues; indeed, one's admiration for the quality and amount of philosophy which Freddie Ayer has done is a good deal increased by this revelation of how swiftly, and how intermittently, he has done it. There are, however, some interesting – and often alarming – sketches of philosophical personalities of the 1930s and 1940s; when the 21-year-old Ayer was elected to a lecturership at Christ Church, Oxford philosophy was still largely dominated by such forbidding figures at H. W. B. Joseph – whose critical ferocity as a tutor had so shaken the ebullient Maurice Bowra that he used to shudder somewhat as he walked through New College half a century afterwards – and H. A. Prichard, whose sympathy with the young and clever was so attenuated that he saw no merit in either Ayer or Austin when they competed for the John Locke prize. That the undergraduate Ayer had not succumbed to the claustrophobia of the regime owed a lot to Gilbert Ryle; from him it was possible to learn what was common knowledge in Cambridge but almost unheard of in Oxford – the most recent views of Moore and Wittgenstein, for instance. Ryle, indeed, emerges with his laurels firmly upon his brow, for his later career as the benevolent autocrat of postwar Oxford philosophy is declared to have been all to the good – he established a rational form of graduate training in philosophy, and was so much more concerned *that* his students thought rather than with *what* they thought that his sponsorship of their careers was not the sponsorship of an orthodoxy.

None the less, it wasn't Gilbert Ryle's philosophy tutorials which earned a First in Greats, but Tom Brown Stevens's teaching in ancient history; a little later the All Souls examiners were no more enthusiastic about his philosophy – in spite of Quintin Hogg's advocacy, the consensus was that so brash an assault on the philosophical decencies showed a lack of real wisdom, or, in John Sparrow's version, at least a lack of wordly wisdom, in view of the examiners' known predilections.

There is a remarkably cool and dispassionate account of his first acquaintance with J. L. Austin, who was later to amuse generations of undergraduates with *Sense and Sensibilia* (his lectures on perception) in which Freddie Ayer was treated with something less than reverence: the so-called 'argument from illusion' being introduced as a comic turn where Professor Ayer, in the implausible garb of the plain man, dribbled up the garden path and shot into his own goal. All the implausible plain man allows himself here is to recall that he once complained that Austin was like a greyhound which won't race, but bites the other greyhounds to stop them racing too. Visually, 'with his steely spectacles, his slight, taut figure, and the light belted macintosh that he often wore, he made me think of a gunman; not a gangster by any

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means, but a follower of Michael Collins, fighting against the Black and Tans.'

Both the Vienna Circle and some of the *émigrés* who passed through Oxford in the Thirties come up for review here. Like everyone else, he found Otto Neurath personally engaging, in spite of his bulk and the marshmallow texture of that copious flesh – Neurath used to sign his letters with a little drawing of an elephant, laughing, crying, proffering flowers or whatever was appropriate. He enlivened one conference a good deal by advancing on the logician Susan Stebbing and politely breaking into English to announce, 'I have always been for the womans'. Oxford seems to have absorbed philosophical refugees with traditional polite indifference. Theodor Adorno – then Teddy Wiesengrund-Adorno – was accepted as comic relief, excessively concerned with his appearance, eccentrically interested in jazz, and neurotically anxious that some Oxford college or other should give him membership of its common room. It sounds as if he met long afterwards what Professor Ayer would regard as an appropriate fate: 'he fell victim to student unrest, suffering a heart attack when some of his female pupils uncovered their breasts and danced around in mockery of him.'

The philosophers are not the most vivid members of the cast; nor, oddly enough, are his first wife, Renee, or the ladies who replaced her in his affections after their divorce in 1942. In some curious fashion, exactly the wrong degree of frankness is achieved, as if judicious Sir Alfred and mischievous Freddie have arrived at an agreement that the reader is entitled to the sort of report on his inner life that might be printed in the *Guardian*. The result lacks the sense of bubbling emotion held in check which the buttoned-up memoirs of the 19th century sometimes achieve, without doing much for mere vulgar curiosity. But the places where married and unmarried life took place come over vividly, and so do minor figures, like the members of the Soho branch of the Westminster Labour Party, or the fellow cadets with whom he struggled through his officer training in the Welsh Guards. There are some nice vignettes, too – the future Duke of Devonshire and the future Grote Professor wobbling in the rear of a platoon of armed cyclists; Captain Ayer in New York meeting Betty Bacall at a lunch party which led straight on to her transformation into Lauren Bacall, and wondering years later if she had kept the record they had made together – her singing *Chattanooga Choo-Choo*, and him reciting Marvell; or his encounter with André Breton, who had suddenly taken it into his head that the English contempt for Hegel showed that the philosophical foundations of Surrealism might be unsound. The young Ayer's schooldays at Ascham and Eton have the interest that everyone else's schooldays do, and his family seem to have lived the sort of vigorous and complex lives appropriate to Swiss-Dutch alliances formed in an alien England. But the hero of these years was his grandfather Dorus Citroen, who paid for his education, and provided encouragement as well as cash. The money came from the manufacture of motor cars – Dorus Citroen founded the Minerva company; the thought of the author of *Language, Truth and Logic* being born aloft by the Owl of Minerva is one that Hegel might have relished.

Martin Amis

A?

Abba Abba by ANTHONY BURGESS *Faber* £3.95

It was in *Joysprick* (1973), I think, that Anthony Burgess first made his grand-sounding distinction between the 'A' novelist and the 'B' novelist. The A novelist, apparently, writes in what we commonly regard as the mainstream: he is interested in character, motive and moral argument, and in how these reveal themselves through action (yes, oh dear me yes, the A novel tells a story). The spunkier and more subversive B novelist, however, is *quite* interested in these things but is at least as interested in other things too: namely, the autonomous play of wit, ideas and language (no, the B novel doesn't necessarily tell a story at all). Certainly, ambitious novelists tend to get more B and less A as they progress. *The Portrait of a Lady* is very A, whereas *The Ambassadors* is clearly hoping to be rather B. *Mary* is contentedly A, *Ada* haughtily B. *The Portrait of the Artist* is already fairly B, and *Finnegans Wake* is about the most B novel we have, hardly A at all. In *Joysprick* Burgess described himself as a 'minor B novelist'. He too, though, used to be happy enough being A. The Malayan trilogy, the Enderby books – these are all pretty A. *A Clockwork Orange* is definitely B-disposed, and the more recent *MF*, in which, for example, the protagonist's skin-colour (black) is revealed on the penultimate page, has nothing A about it whatever. *Abba Abba*, appropriately, mixes the two; it is at least as A as it is B.

And does the title refer to this division between the types? I don't see why not, since it refers to almost everything else you care to think of. Most specifically, of course, it refers to the rhyme scheme of a Petrarchan sonnet octave (the first, and predominantly A, part of the novel stages a meeting in Rome between two sonneteers, Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli and the dying Keats; the second, and predominantly B, part consists of Petrarchan sonnets, evidently from the pen of Belli and translated by an author-surrogate). But Abba Abba means other things as well. It is the Aramaic for 'father father'. It represents some sort of primal blurt about language (Keats dreams that Christ shouts the words from the cross) and about the way poetic form transcends it. Abba is a palindromic chant of the author's (pseudonymous) initials. It is, further, the name of a Scandinavian pop-group. There may be other equally telling references that I have missed.

Such speculation, and such facetiousness, properly belong to the B part of the novel. Some of the B bits, as is increasingly the case with Burgess, seem detachable from the body of the novel, just a gratifying

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ISBN 92-2-101710-9 (limp cover) **£2.80**

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bonus for punsters and polyglots. There is, in addition, a good deal of unrecycled literary criticism here – about the untranslatability of poetry, about the disinterestedness of creative effort. The 70-odd Belli sonnets which end the book, and provide much of its cheek (did they come first, one wonders?), carry a lot of responsibility for the B-stream, attempting as they do to pick up themes touched on in the main text. It is a pity, then, that they are not more fun to read, despite Belli's much plugged earthiness, scurrility, and so on. The rhymes, vital to the arresting monotony of the Petrarchan form, are impossibly lazy (begun/orison, skill/imbecile, fear/Maria, of/dove), and the roguish voice assumed for the poems is so uncertain of its real energy that almost every other sonnet ends in a yelp of mechanical obscenity. 'And waste 300 fucking cannon-balls', 'Would say: "I'd rather have a fucking hen" ' and 'Don't leave a feather on their fucking backs' is how three consecutive sonnets finish.

The A bits pose more familiar challenges. Keats is an especially delicate subject for fictionalisation, and Burgess doesn't avoid many obvious traps. There are several near-crassnesses of the bio-pic variety ('Tomorrow I go north . . . I may see your friend Mr Shelley there'; 'Coleridge says something about the willing suspension of disbelief'), some startling indecorums of speech ('Your so-called Reformation cut you off from the family of Europe'; 'He ate the papacy for breakfast'), an awful, insistent 'lustiness' supposedly characteristic of the age ('Cats are the eternal truths, and the taste of noonday soup, and farting, and snot, and the itch on your back you can't quite reach to scratch'), and a tendency to present writers in general as unrelenting epigrammatists (Keats sometimes sound like an amalgam of Beatrice and Benedick, or, more formidably still, like a character in *The Glittering Prizes*). But the book's principal gamble pays off – and very handsomely. The fact that Keats's death *already* has an almost definitive poignancy does not make it easier to write poignantly about that death. The danger of blasphemy, indeed, is ever-present, and it is only by a new intensity in his prose that Burgess successfully skirts it. Here is Keat's last fever:

> To put off the world outside – the children's cries, snatches of a song, a cheeping sparrow, the walls and the wallpaper and the chairs that thought they would outlast him but would not, the sunlight streaking the door – was not over-difficult. A bigger problem was to separate himself from his body – the hand worn to nothing, the lock of hair that fell into his eyes, even the brain that scurried with words and thoughts and images . . . He tried to give up breathing, to yield to the breathless gods, but his body, worn out as it was, would not have that . . .

Not all of this works, of course, but there is a sense of genuine transport here, as if the language were trying to find its own rhythms, independently of Burgess's often hectic orchestration.

Is intense writing B or can it be A too? Many A novelists have done extraordinary things with prose, though it's certainly true that the B boys call attention to theirs more. Burgess cares about his prose and works hard on it. Every sentence is sure to contain some oddity or other – frequently as a result of will, you feel, rather than of inspiration or even of appropriateness. Burgess starts a sentence, puts another clause in, ends it just like that, without the courtesy of an *and*. He is prone, also, to a kind of paraded muscularity, a needless vividness ('Severn came back . . . to gobble a hunk of yesterday's bread'; 'Belli grabbed his hat . . . and slammed it on his black locks') which is often quite at odds with the mood of the page – ditto his horribly Hopkinsian neologisms and 'kennings'. But the best paragraphs in the book show how the A novelist's material can be animated by the B novelist's preoccupations. Personally I've always believed in the indivisibility of form and content myself, and subscribe to the Nabokov view that there is only one type of writing, that of talent. Well-written A novels are always B novels too. *Abba Abba*, again, is a bit of both.

Michael Duane

This Other Eden

Progressive Retreat: a Sociological Study of Dartington Hall School 1926-57 and Some of its Former Pupils by MAURICE PUNCH *Cambridge* £4.90

This study falls into two sections, the first being a brief historical sketch of the period 1926-57, supported by contemporary documents and by recollections of some former pupils. Those who have talked to many ex-pupils of Dartington will find little that is untypical in what the members of this sample say or in their manner of saying it. The second part of the study attempts to assess how former pupils adjusted to leaving such an *école paradis*, to work, to marriage and children; it sets out to paint a picture of 'the progressive life-style'. The last chapter makes some general comments about Dartington, about the progressive movement as a whole and about what the author calls 'the anti-institution', a label that is not an inaccurate description of the progressive school as seen through the eyes of many of its supporters.

The comments are incisive, well-documented and occasionally abrasive about the more romantic visions of progressive education. The now-famous description of progressive schools as seen by unsympathetic contemporaries –

> communities run by bearded, godless, fornicating anarchists for over-indulged, semi-delinquent children, reared in an atmosphere of unbridled and promiscuous freedom on a diet of grated carrots and bare feet

– is tactfully omitted.

The heart of Maurice Punch's argument runs as follows:

> [The progressive schools'] physical, constitutional and ideological position makes them of limited relevance to the state day system in which the majority of the country's children are educated . . . It costs somewhere in the region of four to five times the amount to keep a pupil at Dartington as it

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does to keep one at a secondary modern school . . . In adopting an anchoretic role in rural communities they cut themselves off from the very people they wished to influence . . . At times [they] are exasperating in their arrogance, their pretentiousness, and their dogmatism . . . Nevertheless, one feels that English education would have been impoverished without the challenge to orthodoxy of the progressive radicals.

I for one would like to see the argument carried further.

Since every society, without exception, shapes its system of education, however apparently informal, to feed its own occupational and social-class structure, serious analysis of how and why schools work in the way they do cannot avoid political, economic, social and cultural questions. The 'great education debate', despite this, has steered clear of such questions as 'Education – for what?' From the Prime Minister downwards every utterance made has taken the present system of social and educational values as read. 'Comprehensivisation' precedes democratisation instead of being the natural result of that process; so the debate offers no real clarification of the relationships between work, school, language, wealth and power.

In the Twenties, when the progressives sprang into being, sociology was almost unknown; resistance to progressive ideas was couched in terms of general morality or philosophy. Today such terminology has an old-fashioned ring. The 'hunches' that powered A. S. Neill, Dora Russell and Bill Curry are being replaced by concepts drawn from the study of language and its relationship to 'intelligence', to occupations and to social status. It is to be hoped that Maurice Punch will continue his studies of progressive education – itself a very elusive concept. He could explore such education as one manifestation of the breakdown of long-held assumptions about the stability of society and about 'human nature'.

Anthony Howard

Stout Party

Memories of a Marriage by LADY MORRISON OF LAMBETH *Muller* £4.95

Family snapshots of politicians are generally far more fun than carefully posed studio portraits. Much the same applies to biographies. Two of the most revealing political books of the past decade are *My Brother Lyndon* by Sam Houston Johnson and *Ted Heath: A Family Portrait* by the former Prime Minister's ex-sister-in-law, Marian Evans. Lady Morrison of Lambeth's *Memories of a Marriage* belongs in the same company: it is forthright, unpretentious and completely without artifice.

Edith Meadowcroft, then 46, married Herbert Morrison, then 67, on 6 January 1955 – Morrison having previously been married for 34 years to a shy and withdrawn first wife who died in 1953. The new Mrs Morrison suffered from no such inhibitions. A redoubtable lady golfer from Rochdale, she had met the 'Mr Polly' of the Labour movement only five months earlier on a holiday in Switzerland. He never, as she records, actually proposed to her ('Let me know if you decide to come and live in London' seems to be the nearest he got) but the second Mrs Morrison was not the woman to let a little thing like that stand in her way:

> I got myself a lovely engagement ring, a single stone diamond with diamond shoulders. And I got the very narrowest wedding ring I could find. I wrote to Herbert to tell him to bring up his morning suit and I ordered a white carnation for him. I also wrote to his secretary to ask her to make sure he got his hair cut the day before he came up.

D. J. Enright

From a Distance

More put inside!
Why, the streets must be quite empty
That I once knew.
But no, there's plenty left to walk to work,
Just a bar or two with tables free.

Some of them in for the second time,
Accident prone.
That he should keep his shoes.
Whoever made the rules,
They broke them. Mindless mules?
Or else retired to finish off a thesis.

One I knew convinced the British,
An intellectual he, no peasant,
That he should keep his shoes.
Long since that empire passed away,
I wonder what he wears today.

There's always one snake in the grass,
And God gets mad. Then there's a
second snake,
And God gets madder.

Such a burden to the State!
And irreproachables who pay their tax,
To keep these old black sheep in clover,
And shoes moreover.

That was why the juries were disbenched,
Squeamish teams who flinched from death –
A man can eat a lot of free food in a life,
Life sentence.

No, the streets will still be busy,
The restaurants too
That I once knew –
The economy's in clover.
'The cost of a thing
Is the amount of life exchanged for it.'
Gaols are no enormous luxury.

CHANGE AND THE CHURCHES

An Anatomy of Religion in Britain

David Perman

In a comprehensive survey the author discusses, among other subjects, the liturgical revolution, the elusive quest for church unity, the effects of inflation, the restructuring of church government, and the malaise of the ministry, as well as the churches' stance on questions of national importance and public concern like race, education, Northern Ireland, pornography and abortion.
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Sheila Macleod

'One of the first successful attempts to use the science fiction format as a platform for the all too human and present-day drama of alienation . . . brilliantly realised' *Time Out*

'Extremely cleverly written . . . a fairly remarkable novel.'
£4·95 *Financial Times*

BODLEY HEAD

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I knew he fancied old Lloyd George's hairstyle but I wasn't having that.

In fact our heroine – for the book is as much about her as Herbert Morrison – seems to have been a match for anyone. Patronised by Mrs Attlee – 'I suppose all your dresses were new to come to London?' – she soon proved that she was not one to be put down. Mrs Attlee got her comeuppance on the spot with a 'Goodness, no, we're quite used to stylish dinner dances in the North', and in the book is further punished by being tartly characterised as someone who thought that 'anywhere beyond Mill Hill was jungle land and that Lancashire was made up of peasants'. Nor did Randolph Churchill fare much better. Finding herself sitting next to him at his father's Royal farewell dinner in Downing Street she could hardly believe her ears when he started criticising the monarchy. 'I looked straight at him and said, "Shut up! I'm probably the greatest royalist here tonight" – and, oddly enough, it seemed to work.'

With the fierceness, however, went a great protectiveness towards her Herbert. It was the second Mrs Morrison's bad luck to marry the deputy leader of the Labour Party only 11 months before his political career collapsed with his humiliating defeat at the hands of Hugh Gaitskell in the 1955 leadership election. Poor Morrison found himself – in Emanuel Shinwell's phrase at the time – 'thrown away like an old glove'. Edith Morrison's reaction was, no doubt, predictable – in all, that is, except its fury (still enough to make strong men blench):

> A lot has been said and written about Herbert's bitterness after his loss of the leadership, but to me this has always been incomprehensible . . . It was I, and not he, who found it impossible to forgive his enemies . . . I got a certain satisfaction out of the deaths of Aneurin Bevan, Hugh Gaitskell and Lady Attlee. I felt that in each case Providence had definitely proved its own power.

Nor did things get much better with the years. When Herbert Morrison finally died in 1965, no one in the Labour Party – his widow now recalls – suggested that there should be a memorial service for him in Westminster Abbey. They were not, though, to be allowed to get away with that – 'I knew that both Aneurin Bevan and Hugh Gaitskell had been honoured in this manner and I was determined that Herbert should not be passed over.' He had, after all, been 'the best husband in the world' and their days together had 'always held their share of joy and fun – and, come to think of it, so did the nights'.

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Nicholas Bethell

Democrazy

Group Captives by HENRY FAULK *Chatto & Windus* £7.50

In 1940 there were less than 300 German prisoners-of-war in Britain. Cyrus Brooks, a British officer, interviewed most of them and could only find one anti-Nazi:

> They thought they were defending their homeland against a planned attack and fighting for room to live. They were sure that after the war the occupied territories would be evacuated and there would be a just peace . . . They were convinced that the Czechs had asked for protection, that there were no more concentration camps and that Germany was not a dictatorship.

During the first years of the war the prisoners in British camps were closely disciplined by their own Nazi enthusiasts. They were excluded by Nazi guards from British radio, publications and even from the camp notice-board. 'Traitors' were physically assaulted and had their names smuggled back to Germany, where reprisals were taken against their families. Then, as the tide of war turned, their numbers rose alarmingly, reaching 200,000 by the end of 1945 and a peak of 400,000 in mid-1946.

These were the peak months of anti-German hatred. Even after they were allowed some limited freedom, they could scarcely enjoy it, because conductors would not allow them on buses and councillors would not allow them into libraries. This attitude increased the defiance of the prisoners, who felt that they had served their country bravely and had done their duty according to law. The hostility they met they attributed to traditional British hypocrisy. They were shown an American film of the concentration camps and, while most believed the film genuine, a sizeable minority saw no unfairness in the treatment of the victims.

This was the unpromising background to an experiment unique in British history, an attempt to re-educate hundreds of thousands of young men, to purge them of their evil ideas and send them home as 'goodies'. Teachers were employed to impart 'the principles of democratic government' and 'to present the British Commonwealth of nations as an example of democratic community in action'. The men were graded white, grey and black. They were lectured, shown films, provided with literature and formed into discussion groups. As they progressed, they moved from black to grey and then finally to white. The whiter they were, the quicker they would be sent home.

Not surprisingly the first results were disappointing. Often as they discarded the ideas of Hitler, they were slow to accept British ideas or even British good will. After all, was it not the height of hypocrisy, months and years after the war was over, for the British to keep them as slave labourers, as if they had done something wrong or committed some crime? Many lapsed into apathy and depression. Most rejected the 'democrazy' ideas that were being stuffed down their throats.

But slowly, as the teachers became more skilful and the hatreds began to fade, the message appeared to have got through. The turning point, it seems from Mr Faulk's book, was the ending of the ban on fraternisation at the end of 1946. Even this made some prisoners suspicious. They believed that the British government had 'given orders for the population to be friendly'. But the attitude of 'serve the b's right', which one report mentions as the general British attitude, was giving way to one of

Robert Conquest

Problems of Sociology, Ethnicity and Ecology in the United States

What drives men to drink?
A Hunk saw a skink,
A Bohunk saw a bobolink,
A monk saw a mink,
A fink saw a skunk,
So they all got drunk.

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'poor b's, it wasn't their fault'. The prisoners began mixing with local communities: 796 of them married English girls and 25,252 stayed in Britain rather than go home.

The author, who himself took part in the re-education, has read widely and used Prisoner of War Division records to produce a revealing book on a little-known subject. At times he does not seem sure whether he is writing for the general reader or for the professional sociologist or psychologist. Some chapters are exciting and full of good stories. Others, especially the one where he draws his conclusions, are full of incomprehensible jargon. More documents for the years 1946-48 will soon be open and weightier books will doubtless be written on this topical subject.

We are often reminded that it was the British who invented concentration camps. No doubt we shall now be told that it was Britain that pioneered re-education and political indoctrination. One wonders whether those who in 1945 laid down the guide-lines for the 'peaceful reabsorption of Germany into the European community, which is a vital British interest', foresaw the massive subsidies that Britain would be receiving from Germany 32 years later.

James Fenton

Hard To Do

The Break-Up of Britain by TOM NAIRN *New Left Books* £7.50

'It is,' wrote Sydney Smith about one of Brougham's essays in the *Edinburgh Review*, 'like the penis of a jackass – long and vigorous.' The same may be said of the essays Tom Nairn has collected for this volume. They are long, they are vigorous and they are also, like the POJ, somewhat exhausting. Mr Nairn writes well, but he writes, for the most part, in a rather specialised language. Many of his words cause one to do a double take – 'ethicity', 'infirmed', 'superstitution'. What is superstitution? The opposite of substitution. But what *is* the opposite of substitution? Superstitution. Ah, yes. Still, Mr Nairn would have done us a greater service if he had aimed to reach a wider audience – if, for instance, he had used the expression 'for instance' more often in his first essay, so that we could be quite sure what he is on about. It may be impossible to unpack the whole of a highly technical argument into everyday language, but it would have been possible to go further than this without – um – infirming? his case.

Mr Nairn's latest book represents an attempt to rescue Marxist analysis from its 'great historical failure' – the theory of nationalism. For, just as the socialist movements of Europe were defeated by the rise of fascist nationalism, so the traditional formulations of Marxism have been proved wildly inadequate. The failure of the Left to address itself adequately to the Irish question is a recent case in point. The

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NB *Bear* by Marian Engel continues its publication success. John Mellors in the *Listener* wrote: 'succeeds at every level, from straight narrative to symbolism.' £3.50

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British Left fell for a romantic notion of Irish nationalism, and in so doing they closed their minds to the existence of the Protestants; when their notions were brutally shattered, they had no way of recovering their grip. In the face of Scottish nationalism, the English Marxist is at a double theoretical and cultural disadvantage. His theory lures him into thinking that nationalism is irrelevant: his pious hope is for proletarian internationalism. And, of course, if Scottish nationalism can be shown on theoretical grounds to be irrelevant, the cultural objections to it provide the real clincher.

For it stinks, does it not? From the English point of view, the greater respect one has for the intellectual and cultural traditions of Scotland, the less one will look forward to some bogus revival of nationhood, with the usual accompaniment of fake ritual, rewritten history, narrowness and kitsch. It is not even as if the nationalists were proposing to construct a culture out of the *whole* of what is available to them. No indeed, the Enlightenment, the great flowering of Edinburgh, is considered by *them* to be the beginning of the problem. It was then that Scotland lost touch with its roots. As for that *Edinburgh Review* for which Brougham wrote, and which was read throughout Europe (Stendhal: 'Je suis tout *Edinburgh Review*') and pirated in America, well – it's nothing to do with Scottishness, is it? Not much of the skirl of the bagpipes there, is there? Nor are the achievements of Scottish scientists and engineers going to contribute much to this proposed tradition, since by their nature they are international. Time and again, the search for Scottishness leads back to the Kailyard, the cabbage-patch school of reassuring provinciality, the Wee Twees. This is Scottishness for foreign consumption. Where is true Scottishness to be found?

From an English point of view, the search is pointless. We find Scottish nationalism nauseating, and it is inevitable that we should do so. We are supposed to be insulted by it, to be humiliated. It's like the end of an affair – 'wifey', with whom we had expected to share the rest of our existence, is leaving home. It is tedious to keep asking whether she will be better off, or whether she has really been wronged. If she really wants to go, go she must. No serious affair ends happily, however, and we may imagine that before she finally clears off wifey will have taken every opportunity to tell us just what she thinks of us, and to make our life as unpleasant as possible.

Mr Nairn gives us a clear insight into what wifey now thinks of hubby. He shows how the success of the English bourgeois revolution made possible a slow and in some respects easeful assimilation of Scotland into Britain. He dwells most suggestively on the long period of 19th-century Scottish history in which absolutely no nationalist movement existed, pointing out how dependent the Union was on the success of the Empire, and how the end of the Empire, its replacement by economic imperialism and the decline of British industry have brought about the conditions for Scottish separatism. He sees nationalism in Scotland as similar to that in Catalonia and among the Basques, where a high degree of industrialisation leads to higher expectancies. The discovery of North Sea Oil provides, in his account, the *occasion* for a movement which had been likely, though not inevitable, for decades. He sees the uneven development of capitalism as the prime motive force for nationalism, but while his analysis is resolutely materialist it does not become reductionist:

> It does not wish or think away the phenomena in question (political romanticism, the idealism of underdevelopment, subjectivism, the need to 'belong', etc.) by asserting that these are mere manifestations of economic trends. It does exactly the opposite. It awards them real force and weight in modern historical development . . . by explaining the material reasons for this newly-acquired leverage.

At the same time, however, it stresses the external conditions which force countries into nationalist struggles.

This is a very good book indeed. It is concerned not only with Scotland, but with Ulster, Wales, England, and the whole range of nationalist movements around the world. Mr Nairn resists the temptation to adopt a moral attitude towards nationalisms, and the temptation to divide them into good and bad categories. There are not goodies or baddies, with a few half-way in between, he says, but 'the whole family is spotted, without exception'. Thus.

> the substance of nationalism as such is always morally, politically, humanly ambiguous. This is why moralising perspectives on the phenomenon always fail, whether they praise or berate it. They simply seize upon one face or another of the creature, and will not admit that there is a common head joining them. But nationalism can in this sense be pictured as like the old Roman god, Janus, who stood above gateways with one face looking forward and one backwards. Thus does nationalism stand over the passage to modernity, for human society.

If Mr Nairn is right, we should not consider the 'Balkanisation' of Britain as a catastrophe, but as a necessary and progressive step towards the replacement of a defunct state.

BATSFORD

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Jeremy Treglown

To Justify the Ends

The Consul's File by PAUL THEROUX *Hamish Hamilton* £3.95
Asylum by OLIVER KNOX *Collins* £4.25
In A Dark Wood by MARINA WARNER *Weidenfeld* £4.50

'Write a story ending with the words ". . ."', they used to tell us at school, and as pedagogic approaches to writing go it was fair advice. To the short-story writer, as to the sonneteer, ends tend to be means to a beginning; and readers faced with so little space between one title and the next are bound to start speculating fairly early on about how what Donne called the shutting-up is going to be contrived. Inevitably, contrived is often the right word. Take 'Coconut Gatherer', for example, in Paul Theroux's new collection, a narrative as diagrammatic as the butterflies you make by squashing paint in a fold of paper. The new US consul to a small Malaysian town meets a local author who impresses him with his ethnic aphorisms and lends him a copy of his recent book. The book is terrible. A year later he visits him again. Seen in the light of the consul's experience of the place the man now seems a fake, churning out the same clichés, spinning the same yarns with disturbingly different details. Having (plausibly?) forgotten meeting the consul, he lends him another copy of his book. The consul (plausibly?) reads it again. This time he likes it, finding its crudities unimportant 'since beneath the husk and fibre of his imitative lyricism so much of what he described was recognisably true to me'.

It's so tidy that it can only read like an epigram – 'Books, unlike people, improve with acquaintance', say. But in this form it stands up to even less scrutiny than the story itself. So what is Theroux getting at? Lit. Crit., of course, has an answer. The subject, it might argue, is the Narrator. The consul's short-story-writing instincts have led him to vacillation and extremes of judgment. As a whole, *The Consul's File* contains plenty of evidence for this view. Here is a diplomat so confused about himself that although in most of his stories he hardly figures at all except as an apology ('I was ashamed to admit . . .', 'I am ashamed to say . . .', 'I'd be embarrassed to tell you . . .'), in 'The Last Colonial' he nevertheless, at a Sultan's party, suddenly and with only the slightest provocation calls his host's daughter, to her face, 'a fat overprivileged little prig'. (It's a lapse made all

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the more dramatic by the consul's confused recollection of the incident: can all those polo-players *really* have gone straight from the game to dinner with the Sultan, all of them still in their reeking kit, even in Malaysia?) Again, here is a man who – with such an experience to relate, and with an episode under his belt as an agent provocateur in pursuit of a multi-murderer ('The Johore Murders') – can still claim that 'Truth is not a saga of alarming episodes'.

As with one story, so with the whole collection: *cherchez la fin*. The last pages explain everything. In the final piece, a letter to someone whose life he saved in No 8, the consul writes: 'What was my life? . . . I wasn't a character; it was the other people who mattered, not me.' So that was it! The *non-narrator* narrator!

And appropriately enough, most of what he writes are non-stories. As in Theroux's novels, but sadly watered-down, there are some good glimpses of middle age, of cultural deracination and of last-ditch pretences. His ear for robust expatriate snobbery is still amusing (an Englishman lends the American a shooting-stick: 'Remember . . . pointed end in the ground. Got it?'). But Theroux's plain style, generally alert in the novels, is often just bland and slack in this collection. 'Pacifists know all the atrocity stories', we are admonished at one point, as if it were a revealing paradox. Well, yes – but perhaps that's why they are pacifists. And elsewhere his casualness not so much about what he means as about what he presumably doesn't mean lets in some odd half-punning jangles. 'I was not quick . . . and the line went dead'.

Asylum is about an advertising executive who gets involved with a political refugee. Darya's Persian-ness is never very convincing, and the world of dog-biscuit copy is an easy target for Oliver Knox's jokes – particularly since his romantically introspective public-school-and-Oxbridge central character is too detached from his work to be endangered by them himself. The crunch comes in chapter 9: 'Dangers and terrors evaporate into farce more often than they materialise' – but the terrors aren't frightening enough and the farce isn't funny enough for either aspect to add up to much.

Marina Warner packs a lot more into her mandarin first novel. Family tensions arise when Paula's father is forced to resign his editorship of *The Review* over the exposure of CIA backing, at the same time as his Jesuit brother has to interrupt his work on a seventeenth-century missionary in China in order to investigate some supposed miracles in Sicily. The West-East political issues embedded in their separate lives are focused off-stage in Vietnam, where Paula's brother-in-law is sent as a reporter, and on-stage in an updated production of *South Pacific* in which her mother is performing. By the time Warner has thrown in a garnish of mixed sex-lives she has enough for half-a-dozen novels, and inevitably in so compressed a treatment the Jesuits turn out jesuitical and the theatre people theatrical. I found it somewhat showy and over-literary – 'The air under their bright leaf appeared cool as ice, but the trees themselves looked as vivid and vibrant as blood, thought Paula' – but the historical Chinese narrative that interlaces it is expert and absorbing.

Radical Joe

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

The Killing Kid

Small Change (A) *EMI International*
The Watchmaker of Saint-Paul (AA) *Academy Two*
Le Gang (AA) *Curzon*

We may have better television than anyone else (and the recently ended revels proved splendid fodder), but – back at the movie-drome – it is mostly foreign matter that lodges in our eyes. The French have a word for it: they also have an image. François Truffaut's *Small Change*, or *L'Argent de poche* – 'pocket money' – met with sharply contrasting Anglo-Saxon attitudes on the occasion of its showing at the Berlin festival last year. No wonder. It deals with childhood and deals children out like hands to be played in some dream card-game. Its massed last portrait, with the pied kids threatening to spill over the edges of the screen, is a greatly disturbing visual event: being both a jolly curtain-call or prize-day, at precisely the same time as it nearly bends the conventional frame with its weight of amateurs, of innocence. This is, by a screaking blackboard chalk, the furthest Truffaut has gone in his cinematic attempts to retrieve or rewrite a past. The piece, with all its faults upon it, has reverberances that invite one to look at its author's mainsprings. Its faults? Let me quote those English-speaking critics. 'Well-nigh perfect . . . sends one out of the cinema with a nice warm glow.' 'A sort of rosily rasping *Zéro de Conduite*, trying a little too hard to charm.' And yes, one says, yes, yes, you are both right. Only – one adds – who but a Truffaut, who *but* Truffaut could have made this?

This is an affair often out to captivate yet veined with hurt. Anyone who sat through its director's first feature, *Les 400 Coups*, with his equanimity intact should now bow out. Down to its final frozen snapshot of the remand-school boy dubiously escaped to the very wrinkling rim of the sea, that astounding debut spelt out an early, maiming upbringing. In various films since then, Truffaut has cast Jean-Pierre Léaud as the unparented youngster, oddly never more so than in *L'Enfant Sauvage*, where Léaud took a rest while Truffaut himself played an ambiguous major role as the decent but blinkered teacher who took a wolf-child under his tutelage. Some of us thought that he had finally worked out a manner of coping with his memories of an abandonment by uncaring family, a rescue by André Bazin (doyen of French critics) which rivalled one of those eagle-swoops in the most primitive footage of film, a subsequent devotion to the extraordinary emotional upbringing looking at too many B-features in the dark. Profounder discussion here would centre on the different uses Godard, Chabrol, Truffaut *et cie* were to make of this twilight forcing-ground. While we were playing cricket, they were playing truant.

And the children burgeon from that never-had, conceivably never-havable formative time of Truffaut's. He fairly splashes the screen with them. His canvas is based on Thiers, a provincial town essentially centred on a junior school, a block of flats, the local flea-pit. Impressionism is the house-style. There is a form of the child as *objet trouvé* in the small, swaggering person of Julien, a raggedy kid who is spotted clambering to a high, dubious home in a lumber-yard: he turns up with bruises, steals as one breathes, is the laden pivot on which a lot of the action swivels. He is, ultimately, the ur-Truffaut figure, subject of a meandering monologue delivered by an older Truffaut-stand-in: a teacher at the school which never realistically noticed him. The camera has shown the gamin too obtrusively for this to register as normally probable. His wounds and welts are, though – as is the unsettling affection shown by his drunken, gipsy mother for her white-haired mother in turn, hauled away by a police van. The downward affection somehow has gone wrong.

Another twist of the unfortunate wheel, which pretty steadily has chucked off the young in favour of their begetters. A fetching boychik falls for a lady-hairdresser, fantasising a sexy meeting with this mother of a *copain*. This possible-dream is balanced by distinct weirdness, also surreal: where the lad eats a vast dinner at his beloved's place and dottily responds, 'Thank you for your frugal meal.' Item: a two-year-old pushes a grey kitten out to a lower ledge from a high balcony, then, after heart-pounding pother, himself falls to a sure doom: only he bounces back, to utter '*Gregory fait boum*'. He does, indeed. Earlier, he has been trapped in a cute film-still after making a right mess of mummy's shopping. Shades of that stopped-frame that halted Truffaut's first: but how intentional? Is a curse being taken off? Item: a first kiss – made a huge, sweet occasion of at a kids' formally sex-segregated holiday camp. Item: a set-piece of a naughty girleen's refusal to go out to dinner with her parents – she shouts through policeman-pappa's bull-horn, '*Mal pain*', while façaded neighbours tut-tut and their offspring invent a rope-slung basket of grub. Item: a misbegotten haircut. Item: a farcical version of Pathé News. From the neighbourhood flea-pit. A great [illegible] from those flickering [illegible] everyone from teacher to [illegible] an idiot who is [illegible] he or she has [illegible] enlisted as participant in Truffaut's strangely painful flick. These fragments has he shored against his ruins? At least, he has made them live.

Bertrand Tavernier's *The Watchmaker of Saint-Paul* has had to wait its time before finding a billet and has now cruised, with right gentleness, into the Academy. Made in 1973, this first feature is a fine example of an elegant conversion. To begin with, there was a novel – set in America – by Georges Simenon, and it has been transplanted by Tavernier and a couple of writers to Lyons while sustaining all the tongue-searching taste of the original. Those awkward, life-like corners and angsts of a Simenon, material for further scrutiny, come into existence under the sustained image of a heavily blazing vehicle: a burnt-out case shoved at one under the credits. The irritation thus instituted is alternately kept active and soothed by the subsequent carry-ons. A lumpish fellow, Michel, who attends to the repairs of clocks and watches in Lyons, is excellently embodied in the somehow-vegetable that is Philippe Noiret, an attentive actor who seems just to have shaken his feet free of an allotment. The district of France in question is one devoted, as it happens, to a more animal form of nourishment, of which an amount is consumed on camera: meals are moments for rendezvous, meaty plates underhang jowled, serious faces, and there is a reasonable modicum of doubt accessible as to whether the food is in debate or a larger, moral issue. Like murder – which is why the excellent watchmaker so frequently meets the maybe equally excellent inspector of police (Jean Rochefort): Michel's son, an ideological stray, has apparently killed a fascist factory fellow who was uncosily besetting his girlfriend.

Time may have run away with some of the political preoccupations underpinning this enterprise; nothing is faster to fade than yesterday's nasty headlines, particularly if they need another country's history to make sense of them. Tavernier has dedicated his effort – a notable one as a conversion of Simenon's special gamut of greys into a coloured equivalent – to Jacques Prêvert, an oldster in terms of going-steady with the Left, and his juggling with the smudged or dirty shades of morality is memorable. Precisely how meaningful it will register in that last is open to question. Meanwhile, observe the incidents and performances, notably an off-key appearance by Andrée Tainsy as a confidante of the killing kid.

Given that this is French week, a kind of *outré-Mache*, what worse to conclude on than Jacques Deray's *Le Gang*? M. Deray was responsible, if that is the just word, for such money-spinners as *Borsalino* (1970), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Alain Delon, and *Borsalino & Co* (1974), with Alain Delon, and now we are asked to settle for just Delon – in a black Harpo-Marx fright-wig at that – leading a highly improbable group of grown-up delinquents in that somehow *sympa* moment – under French eyes – immediately after the last world war. Rollicking, jaunty music behind the credits and beneath the discredits of the movie proper attempts to persuade us that killers are a frolic, tarts wholesome, and cops automatically stupid and corrupt.

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

That's History

The Glass Menagerie *Shaw*
The Red Battery Sign *Roundhouse*
State of Revolution *Lyttelton*
The Ascent of Mount Fuji *Hampstead*

Tennessee Williams has always seen people as lonely, frazzled and probably doomed, but in the heyday of his career he thought that the fault was in themselves and those immediately round them, not in some vague conspiracy of politicians and industrialists posing as American 'society'. The trouble with the characters of *The Glass Menagerie* is precisely that they are cut off from the world outside. The sister, Laura, is shy and odd because she's closeted up with a mother whose frantic possessiveness would make Cerberus seem soft and yielding, and the brother, Tom, knows that his only chance of survival is to escape from the family dungeon, which he very wisely does in the last frame. 'Society' is alluring, liberating, conceivably even benign: at any rate, its only representative is a 'gentleman caller' who, so far from raping Laura beside the umbrella stand, offers her some sound and helpful advice before melting back into the dark beyond. But there's no need to toil the point. The play is well known, and well revived at the Shaw by Jonathan Lynn, who has coaxed nice, sensitive performances from Connie Booth and James Aubrey and a rather more insensitive one from Maxine Audley, too much the harsh maternal predator, too little the victim of her own disappointment, insecurity and lack of insight.

Williams has obviously moved a long way in disillusion and scepticism since then, but never before has he crash-landed so far over the boundaries imposed by reason, plausibility and the nature of his own talent. The main characters of *The Red Battery Sign* are familiar enough, walking wounded with self-consciously resonant names: Woman Downtown, neurotic and (in every sense) loaded, and King, a Hispanic singer with a disintegrating brain and a smashed career. We shouldn't be surprised at his incestuous affection for his daughter or at her broken marriage to a man whose idea of love was to whisper obscenities and fiddle with himself. Personal relationships are like that in mainstream Tennessee, and personal relationships are the thing. But wait. The setting is actually Dallas, epicentre of assassination country, and the estranged husband is the Red Battery Man, head of an international combine awesome enough to have already fixed on the next American president but two. When he isn't furthering his plans for world-domination, he's receiving reports on Woman Downtown, who is permanently watched lest she betray his trade secrets. That's what has discombobulated her. That's why she lunges gratefully into King's unlikely arms and why, in a spectacularly eccentric ending, she becomes house-mother to a coven of wolfish hoodlums and sends them on bombing sorties against Red Battery territory.

Williams has, I suspect, imbibed more Watergate than is good for his sense and stability. He was high on Haldeman, crocked silly on Nixon, when he wrote this woozy, scattered, deeply paranoid melodrama, its lack of grasp over its subject proved, if further proof be needed, by its tendency to collapse into cliché. 'You have somezeenk in you zat is wild, like flamenco, somezeenk like my kid in Chicago, a heart on fire,' typically opines King. And again: 'I zeenk you are just a leetle girl who has had a bad dream and has run to poppa's bedroom to tell him.' Keith Baxter is the player doomed to spout such lines, Estelle Kohler the one who must listen and respond in kind. He gives a hoarse, wide-eyed performance, one which strangely suggests that a damaged head causes acute breathlessness, she a more girlish and unscarred one than the circumstances would warrant; and I could only lament both their lots. I respect, indeed revere, much of Williams's work, and fully recognize that a return to the style of *Glass Menagerie* is impossible. But politics seem no more his forte than that of your average brain-surgeon is, let us say, deep-sea diving. *The Red Battery Sign* shows him, in most essentials, out of his depth.

Robert Bolt is an apostate communist; but those who rummage through *State of Revolution* for obvious signs of right-wing rancour, vindictiveness towards a faith held and lost, are going to have to rummage hard and long. It manipulates us cautiously, with due respect for the facts, until you catch yourself wondering if it's no more than an anonymous chronicle, a flattish, drabbish reconstruction of power-play in Russia between 1910 and 1924. But manipulate us it does – how, indeed, could it do otherwise, given the need to select from evidence as touchy and controversial as this? Obviously, we're supposed to contrast giddy promise with glum fulfilment as a minority party forces its ideas on a backward people. More interestingly, we're to stand back and contemplate the workings of the Bolshevik mind, with its belief in the primacy, not just of means over ends and the mass over the individual, but of history over will. No ancient Greek cringed more submissively before the Olympian gods than these people before their economic ones; and it was (suggests Mr Bolt) a comforting stance, since it relieved them of personal responsibility for their harshest actions and promised that even their errors wouldn't matter in the long run. It was history, not party fanatics, which massacred recalcitrant peasants in Georgia, and history, not Lenin, which then relented and offered them a measure of free enterprise. History is us, whatever we do. Or, as Stalin revised the claim, history is me.

Perhaps we would have had a more intellectually satisfying play if Mr Bolt had come out of hiding and delved more deeply into Marxist fatalism. Perhaps it would have been a more emotionally satisfying one if he had paused longer over his more tantalising characters, such as Dzerzhinsky, the gentle and benevolent puritan we eventually see issuing ferocious proclamations from Cheka headquarters. What happened inside that prim, principled brainbox? As it is, *State of Revolution* doesn't satisfy any hunger, whether for ideas about life or for life itself. Michael Kitchen makes a nimble-witted Trotsky, a Kremlin dandy, and Terence Rigby a suitably ominous Stalin, brooding on the sidelines and occasionally breaking into an oily, nagging whine borrowed from the Powellite Midlands; but only Michael Bryant's feisty, bustling Lenin seems at all thoroughly observed, and even then in a pretty external way. Here, it seems, is a naturally humane man, with a chilling ability to separate personal feeling from public duty as Marxist theory defines it. Bolt's portrait is not unsympathetic or ungenerous, considering it's of a political antagonist; but it needs less documentary detail and more depth.

What would Mr Bolt's characters have thought of *The Ascent of Mount Fuji*, a Soviet play that, in the most guarded and timid way, suggests that the claims of friendship may be as compelling as those of patriotism? Stalin, for one, wouldn't have left co-authors Chingiz Aitmatov and Kaltai Mukhamedzhanov free to frisk through the Steppes. Altogether, this is a peculiar piece even for 1970, a play written from and set in central Asia, and yet populated by people who might be on vacation from Simon Gray's Hampstead: jaded opportunists, most of them, forever squabbling with their wives. Which of four old war-comrades betrayed the fifth and ablest for writing a pacifist poem? We never learn the answer; but we do learn much about contemporary Russia and what can and can't be discussed by intelligent people more or less loyal to the régime. An interesting evening, decently staged and acted.

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Television

Ian Hamilton

Care For a Smoke?

'He was trying to tell us something in his little way.' Mum fondly smiled back at the *Man Alive Report* (BBC-2) interviewer as she recalled this treasured moment of communication with her only boy. No, she didn't know exactly *what* little Johnny had been trying to say but she did know that he'd chosen a touchingly eccentric way of saying it: he'd simply romped out one morning and burned down three local schools. According to *Man Alive* this is getting to be a fairly routine way of making hols last longer; in one year 84 schools have been reduced to cinders. If you have a rotten time in the Lower Third Remove, you just remove it. If they force you to wear blazers . . . and so on.

The bill for little Johnny's endearing bid for self-expression was around £¾m. A lot of cash, Mum did agree, but at least the little chap hadn't come home boasting about what he'd done. 'He seemed a little bit excited, but inasmuch as he had an enthusiastic attitude to life, we didn't think anything was untoward.' 'But burning down *three* whole schools, that's surely a pretty determined act.' 'Yes, he's a very determined boy.' Well, mums will be mums; they'd dote on a rattlesnake if they'd given birth to it. Dads, though, I've always liked to think, are more sensitive to the demerits of their young. Not so with Johnny's pa. He too confessed to feeling a secret pride that his son 'had struck back at something' and went on to rail in his own right against 'society as it is today'. One felt that it wouldn't take much to make him too reach for the Swan Vestas, and that it was probably just as well for Johnny that he *hadn't* struck back at the old man man to man.

Many a disownable child arsonist was presented for our appalled inspection, and huge price-tags were attached to photos of the schools they'd burned. Interviews with the culprits didn't get much further than interviews with the parents: 'We thought of setting fire to it, but we didn't think it would have burned down.' Motives were discovered in some cases; one kid was angry at the raising of the school-leaving age, another hadn't got as many O-levels as he'd bargained for. Psychologists were approached, and spoke vaguely about 'a sense of power, of ultimate destruction'. They could spot an arsonist very early, one shrink blithely claimed, though not of course before he actually sets fire to something. 'As psychologists, if we find a child burn a school down, we know there is a problem.'

In other words, general bafflement prevailed. The show did, so to speak, catch fire when one supremely taciturn delinquent was thrust into a face-to-face session with his erstwhile headmaster. As if he'd been unsuccessfully rehearsed by a probation officer, the lad kept claiming that all he'd wanted from his young life had been someone to talk to; 'I needed help'. Refused this never-easily-come-by commodity, he'd had no choice but to set the school alight. Headmaster (now out of a job, at least in part because of the young thug) knew that he had to furrow his brow, admit to his own human failings, and so on. He'd seen enough television documentaries to know that headmasters are always in the wrong at times like these.

None the less, to do the old chap credit, he didn't entirely manage to disguise his loathing of the pampered firebrand. Social workers say of you, he confided to the youth, that you are 'an inveterate liar and a petty thief' and many of your friends regard you as a 'bit pathetic' – he of course didn't go along with slick summarisings of this sort, but he did feel obliged to report the findings of types less brimming with compassion than himself. The youth pouted threateningly throughout all this, and even Harold Williamson's practised coaxing failed to achieve even a flicker of *rapprochement*; in fact, it probably took more skill than we were shown for him to keep the pair from springing at each other's throats. Edge-of-the-seat stuff, and regrettably the last *Man Alive Report* for the time being.

Ghost of Venice (BBC-1) was the first of a new spooky-drama series which will be filling the *Match of the Day* slot during the barren summer months (a slot, come to think of it, that *Man Alive* could wittily have filled this week). Written by Robert Muller and starring the rapidly fattening Robert Hardy, it all centred on the Hardy character's application to join the Club of the Damned. To get into this slumped gathering you have to tell a tale of such total horror that even jaded regulars get scared. If even one regular finds your yarn sub-standard, you must die. The tale told on this occasion was of such grindingly slow-paced monotony that by the close the damned were looking as if life might be worth living after all.

Fidel Castro Speaks (BBC-2) was not as long as one of Fidel's speeches, but it did go on a bit; detailed boasting about early guerrilla feats was easier to take than more up-to-date rhetoric about the excellence of the Russian way of life. When reminiscing, Castro had a force and genuineness that few politicians can muster, even when on the subject of their finest hour. When preaching, he became mechanical and staccato, as if by sheer speed of utterance he could avoid having to listen to his own clichés and evasions. Still, I wouldn't have wanted to take the rap for editing any of it out.

Geoffrey Grigson

Respite

Thinking of unhappiness and marriages
I sat on my unmade bed, looked out,
And with surprise, wind having calmed,
Saw Buddha's great face rounded
In our trees. And back came
The wind, and broke the leaves.

Opera

Eric Sams

Words Failed It

The Fairy Queen *Sadler's Wells*

Take any old play. Mince its words; chop and change its scenes. Add lavish portions of allegorical song, dance and spectacle; season liberally with erotic sauce and spice. Leave to be set by Purcell; and then serve throughout the lazy time between supper and bed. That recipe was much relished by the aristocracy of Stuart England; but the present-day citizenry may well find the taste unfamiliar or even unappetising. That typical sample, *The Fairy Queen*, has been further cut, not to say doctored, for modern performance. But in other respects it must have seemed the ideal Jubilee fare. The first-night audience arrived ready-primed and prepared for the genre. Pageantry, masque and revel had been the order of the day. The morning's glittering parades and resplendent processions, in the traditional manure, must already have plunged the entire populace into profound allegorical meditation.

And what clearer symbolism could there be than the use of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as the background drama, with its simple yet lovable workers, its confused but estimable gentry, its worldly-wise and benevolent government, and above all its royal realm of make-believe, whose very presence is a mystery as well as a grace? Admittedly only the fairy crew had anything to sing about; but their four entr'acte masques (of Night, Love, the Seasons and Marriage) were composed by the sovereign master of English dramatic music. So the stage, like the streets, seemed set for a triumph.

The trouble began with the spoken play. Words failed it. The villain of the piece was an anonymous hack known to theatre historians as '(?) Elkanah Settle'. Thus the authorship is the converse of being a settled question; which is perhaps just as well, since it involves responsibility for what must surely be the wettest and limpest *Dream* in the history of evening entertainment. Even the talented players of the EMTO could make little of such ill-used parts, even with the best will in the world. The lordly language was so vilely mangled and garbled as to suggest perpetual confusion and misquotation. Some degree of reversion to the original text might have been better advised (despite the director's explicit disavowal in the programme notes).

Further, the expression behind the masques is either stupefyingly dull or else impenetrably bizarre. Even Stuart audiences must have groaned at the inevitable Four Seasons; and the final scene is mysteriously diversified by Chinese and monkeys, perhaps representing two different kinds of puzzle The production out-settles Settle by rehashing him in turn. Whoever had the idea of introducing Ophelia, it has to be pro nounced a failure (although her drowning

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scene was vastly affecting, especially at the moment when she visibly and audibly touched Bottom). There were other more dubious touches. No doubt these evoked the authentic stage style of *c.*1700, when even the easy-going Defoe was moved to protest at the 'Lewdness of the Actings'. But it is surely too blatant even for the unsubtle (?)Settle, let alone the refined Purcell, to illustrate Night by groping. By definition, we ought not to be able to see what Secrecy is up to.

Otherwise the direction and production were tasteful as well as colourful; and together they achieved moments of real ritual and genuine jubilation. The plain circular setting of the fairy ring was adroitly stage-managed and choreographed by deft spacing and placing to display plenty of close dancing but no tripping. But of course it was the music that finally turned the scales. Its inspiration is the more remarkable for being wholly non-Shakespearean; the two greatest English monarchs of the royal melodic line hardly met at any point. Instead, Purcell worked wonders with witless words written for him, drawing out their least hint of image or feeling into those bright strands of sound that Britten once described as 'wonderful vocal parts and fine strong basses'.

Among the five gifted principals I especially admired Ann Murray's fluent grace of line and John Tomlinson's resonant strength of tone. The orchestral playing under Stuart Bedford was suitably spirited or languishing, enhanced in either mood by Nicholas Kraemer's musicianly harpsichord continuo. The diction and blending of the choral ensemble were memorably eloquent and balanced. In the performance as a whole, any minor infelicities were effaced by the strong impression of well-directed and purposeful corporate endeavour. That must make a special appeal to the nation in Jubilee year. Unhappily, so must this Company, which is also in financial difficulties. The EMTC, on this showing, well deserves support.

Music

Andrew Clements

Deluge

Stockhausen *Queen Elizabeth Hall*
A Gentle Spirit *Collegiate Theatre*

Stockhausen has always been his own best publicist. A personality of striking force and public charm, his introductions to concerts, lecture tours and writings have conveyed more vividly than any critical commentary the essence of his musical explorations. As a result he now has a far wider following than any of his contemporaries, yet for a long time his music remained uncompromising in its demands on the listener. Even in the text pieces of the late Sixities, for instance, the simplicity of means belies a complexity of ends; although the performers have to improvise only from a short evocative prose poem, in the versions supervised by Stockhausen at least, they do so out of a background of his more fully determined works, often quoting from them. More recently, however, some of his work has moved out of a purely musical context and into a quasi-theatrical one. In no way can these compositions be classified as music theatre, for the dramatic elements merely create an environment in which the musical events may occur, sustaining the non-specialist listener when he may not appreciate the nuances of the audible structure. More dubiously, coating the pill in this way frequently allows Stockhausen to propound the somewhat woolly philosophical aspirations that have surrounded his music in the last decade.

So it is with *Harlequin* and the *American Indian Songs*. They are, Stockhausen admits, the simple side of his music; both were written while he was working on very complex orchestral scores. *Harlequin* is the more recent (1975) and considerably less impressive. A solo clarinettist dressed in androgynous Harlequin's costume dances and pirouettes about the stage, slowly expanding a long-limbed melody until, complete, she presents it kneeling in front of the audience. The process is then reversed and the melody disassembled to a single closing wail. It lasts about forty minutes. What we hear, says Stockhausen, is the 'genesis' and 'deluge' of a form; but the musical effect of the work seems secondary to the message:

> Harlequin is an archetypal figure who reappears from time to time in art; here he is reborn into a new form . . . Out of the dream messenger awake successively the playful constructor, the enamoured lyric, the pedantic teacher, the passionate dancer and the exalted spinning spirit with his bird cries.

Also by extension, I suppose, he is the creative artist and the work an allegory of the creative act, but this would be to take too seriously an overlong insubstantial work relieved from tedium only by Suzanne Stephen's sometimes witty and quite attractive performance.

At least the *Indian Songs* offered some musical satisfaction. Originally part of *Alphabet für Liege*, an 'event' which Stockhausen organised in 1972, it uses a dozen Red Indian poems in simple diatonic settings which sound more like Britten or Copland than anything else he's written. Structurally, however, in some respects the *Songs* relate to *Stimmung*, an extraordinary vocal work written ten years ago. Although the settings only gradually become more complex, the singers are free to introduce 'magic names', phrases and onomatopoeic syllables into the songs at specified points. The texture is thus much more variegated than one would expect from the basic premise of the work; it is often extremely beautiful and sometimes highly amusing. Once again the songs are given a dramatic packaging: the two singers (soprano and tenor in this performance) enter in procession, apparently in a state of meditation, to sit on low cushions on a suitably ethnic-looking blanket. From time to time they stand to summon spirits, sprinkle the other with water or confetti, or dance. Yet for once these effects enhance the spell of the music; not the most profound of Stockhausen's scores but easy on the ear nevertheless.

Stockhausen's rather comfortable mysticism was a welcome relief after the unrelieved gloom of John Tavener's new one-act opera, *A Gentle Spirit*, based on a Dostoevsky short story tightened into a cogent libretto by Gerard McLarnon, is about a pawnbroker whose wife commits suicide by jumping through a window clutching an icon. The reasons for the suicide are gradually revealed through a series of flash-backs to incidents in their married life. The husband's complete failure to allow the wife a life of her own is a return to Tavener's constant preoccupation with mortality and spiritual immortality – a recording of her singing 'let my soul live' punctuates the opera, accompanied by a drone which symbolises the tension of her suicide fall. So far so good; but the music consistently overplays the drama. A huge battery of percussion creates a wall of sound quite out of proportion to the tensions of the action; although there are some striking vocal and instrumental effects – the sight and sound of the pathetic wife constantly and hysterically crossing herself lingers long after the rest of the music has faded from the memory – the singers generally have an uphill struggle with their lines. Kenneth Woollam coped well with the extremely demanding tenor role, and Elise Ross was a fetching and sometimes moving wife. The Nash Ensemble accompanied and put on the production: it's the sort of repertoire that the doomed English Music Theatre Company should be promoting if their name had any meaning at all.

Cookery

Hilary Spurling

Bloudshotten

May and June seem on the whole to have been the cruellest months in the Jacobean kitchen calendar. Now is the time for doing frightful things to young swallows – taking them alive from the nest, grinding them up 'feathers and all' in a mortar with bay leaves, lavender and black snails; or chopping the fledglings very small, frying them 'till they bee as black as a cole' and pounding them to an ointment with an equal part of fried earthworms. Oil of swallows, applied in conjunction with a plaster of 'new digged earth', was reckoned to cure a withered hand.

Now is also the time for concocting beefsteak face-washes ('In May take the flesh of the Buttockes of a yonge Stear . . .'), and for collecting various kinds of dung. A poultice of bullocks' gall, brandy and horse dung eases the pain of the gout. Hen dung in milk would no doubt still come in handy 'For a mad Doggs biting'. As to the first fruits of the summer, Lady Fettiplace's cookery book gives a sinister receipt for the 'Ruberb Pilles', hedged with warnings about

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the danger of taking too many, the ferocious speed with which they will work and the inevitable difficulty of stopping them once they have started.

Gooseberries are another matter. Lady Fettiplace gives directions for putting them up in all the usual preserves and crystallised jellies and gooseberry wine; but she also used them in a much more unexpected, and decidedly successful, piquant green sauce for chicken. Anyone who bilks at the sour gooseberry purées traditionally served in France and England with mackerel may well enjoy this rather subtler sauce, in which the tartness of gooseberries (like the handful of capers in a Sauce Rémoulade or Gribiche) supplies an essential but not at all dominating element. I have made it all the year round with tinned gooseberries, but these are no substitute for the small, hard green fruit which comes at the start of the season and gives a sweet-and-sour sharpness especially good with a bland meat like chicken.

> Take a good handfull of parselie, pick it small, & a good handfull of gooseberries, & a pretie quantitie of tyme, mince it small, & three large mace, & put these all together in a dish, & a little pepper, & salt, & half a pinte of white wine, & some broth that the chicken were boiled in, & a piece of sweet butter, & let it boile halfe an hower, & when the chickins are boiled inough, put that broth to them, & serve them, put some suger into it.

The quantities given are about right for a medium-sized bird, weighing between two and three pounds, which will serve four people. Make the sauce in a small thick pan; use only a blade or two of mace; and on no account forget the nut of butter at the end, which makes a disproportionate difference to both taste and smooth texture. Lady Fettiplace boiled her chicken but I generally roast mine in butter (in which case proceed more or less as above, stewing the gooseberries with herbs and a glass of wine and a little chicken stock, and finish off by adding the roasting juices from the pan). Eat it with a dish of rice and a green salad.

Equally good, if less adventurous, is Lady Fettiplace's receipt for buttered gooseberries, an ancient delicacy only less rich than gooseberry fool and a trifle more suave than gooseberry tart:

> To butter goosberries.
> Take your gooseberries before they are ripe, & put them in a dish with a good piece of sweet butter, cover them close and let them boyle till they begin to break, then stirre them till they bee all broken, then put in some sugar to them & rosewater & the yelks of two eggs, beaten, so stirre it alltogether, & serve it upon sippets.

Take a pound of gooseberries, topped and tailed, and cook them gently in an ounce of butter till they are soft enough to mash with a fork (they can of course be sieved or liquidised if you prefer a perfectly smooth texture). Now re-heat the mixture, adding two beaten egg-yolks and stirring over a low heat till the purée thickens. Sweeten to taste, flavour with rosewater (triple strength is best), pour the whole into a china bowl and leave till thoroughly cold. 'Sippets' are slices of bread, perhaps best left out unless you like a fairly solid custard.

Incidentally, people with red eyes would be well advised to leave a jamjar on the window-sill in the next week or two since rainwater bottled in June will keep sweet all the year as a sovereign cure for 'bloud-shotten eyes'.

4 New Chess Books from

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Weekend Competition

No 2468 Set by Norman Moonbase

Assiduous comp-readers may recall Ted Pauker's portmanteau literary form, the limeraiku:

> There's a vile old man
> Of Japan, who roars at whores:
> 'Where's your fucking fan?'

Thus the form of the haiku (5, 7, 5 syllable lines) also contains the rhyme-scheme and subject-matter of the limerick. More, please, by 1 July. This one should sort you out, so we're offering fairly big money.

Result of No 2465 Set by T. A. Dyer

The Persian Version. We asked you to explain how certain famous defeats were actually tactical victories.

Report By Little Keith

Len the Unlucky's intelligence services have discovered that C. Vita-Finzi, who used to spend his winnings on books, is now reduced to spending them on coffee. Had he seen your entries this week, he would doubtless have hazarded a sour smile of approval at your comments on Britain's victory over inflation. A nice spread of entries on other subjects, though; six index-linked greenies to each of you.

> Dey come in fifty t'ousand
> Dem fancy fighting Yids
> But Entebbe aint in Mouseland
> Did dey t'ink we was kids?
>
> We fit a bloody battle
> Dem Yids falls down in heaps
> We kills 'em jes' like cattle
> An' takes t'ree Hundred jeeps.
>
> We shoots down scores o' planes
> We smashes dem all day
> 'N what dey get for all deir pains?
> 'bout hundred got away.
>
> L. G. Udall

Why is it that successive British governments take so few effective measures to stem the inflation they ostensibly bemoan? Even to ask such a question is to be stupefyingly naïve. Governments don't loathe inflation: they *love* it; for every halving of the pound that used to be in your pocket represents a halving in real terms of the National Debt. One year of inflation at current rates achieves more than a whole century of Sinking Fund. When money ceases to have any value whatsoever – and you've got to hand it to them, at the rate they're going, they're bang on target for 1984 – the National Debt will, of course, inevitably, *pari passu*, cease to exist; and the country will, in consequence, be in the black for the first time since the end of the seventeenth century. Inflation a curse? Gammon! It's the only road to solvency . . . Tim O'Dowda

The Remagen ruse was completely successful, and opened the operation whereby the western enemies were sucked into the heart of the Reich. Even when their Rhine crossing farther north was deliberately permitted, they did not suspect the trap. Their troops suffered appalling casualties, and more and more of their airmen were shot down, ordered to fly extra terror raids from closer bases. Similar methods succeeded in the east, where huge numbers of Russians were lured into the Berlin killing-ground. Meanwhile our submarines were skilfully withdrawn, leaving enemy ships to burn costly fuel, uselessly scouring the Atlantic for targets that simply did not exist! Finally, and according to our plan, Americans and Russians clashed head-on, sparking off the enmity between these two bullying tyrannies that has grown ever since. We melted away, content that an apparent tactical defeat was the greatest strategic victory in history.

M. Borman

> It was an Ulster evening,
> And old Paisley's strike was o'er,
> And he before his chapel sat
> To plan another war;
> And near him his supporters, all eager
> for the lists,
> The avid God's-A-Prod brigade, the
> Ulster Unionists.
>
> 'And was the strike a great success?'
> They ask the Reverend P.,
> 'For nothing much was really stopped
> Can it have been a victory?
> And how did all we did that day
> Do much to fight the IRA?'
>
> 'The action was intended, lads,
> To show them what we're like.
> You say it had no real effect,
> But it was an Irish strike.
> We showed the British Government that
> loyal Ulster folk
> Can still behave as Irishmen in any Irish joke.'
>
> Maud Gracechurch

Mr Rees was prepared for a stormy reception at the police conference, but scored a singular success in attempting to moderate police pay claims. The informal proceedings Rees had insisted upon (delegates were not required to stand when he entered the conference hall) clearly helped to defuse potential opposition. Rees's reassurance that 'I am aware of your problems' was received with affirmative and respectful silence. One delegate shouted out during his speech, but was quickly silenced by fellow officers; Constable Bob Chambers later demanded that the man be censured for interrupting the Home Secretary. Mr Rees was welcomed noisily outside, patted on the back and made to link arms in the traditional manner of demonstrating police solidarity. One plain-clothes man, who clung enthusiastically to Rees's departing car, had to be restrained by a senior officer. Peter Rumney

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 38 **Lanzarote**

The Las Palmas Tournament is traditionally followed by a second, slightly weaker event on the neighbouring island of Lanzarote. This year the 12 players included three GMs, two candidate GMs and two other IMs. After my recent performances (I think that is the most appropriate term for them) I have become rather bored with losing games (20 in six months). Consequently I decided to modify my attempts to produce interesting chess in favour of scoring some points. This resulted in several short draws, some untidy wins against the lower players, and, much to my relief, a share of first place.

Of the Spanish players present, Garcia Padron deserves some mention. Whilst his final result was not spectacular, at 19 he already has the scalps of Tal and Browne to his credit and surely has a promising future.

As for the general organisation, it is a salutary thought that an island of 50,000 inhabitants can arrange an annual tournament rather better than anything this country can offer.

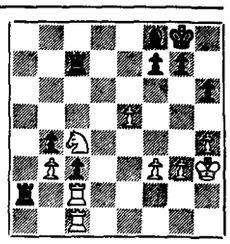
My most (and possibly only) interesting game of the tournament:

White: A. Martin **Black: A. J. Miles**

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. P-Q4, P x P; 4. N x P, P-KN3; 5. N-QB3, B-N2; 6. B-K3, N-B3; 7. B-QB4, 0-0; 8. B-N3, P-Q3; 9. P-B3, B-Q2; 10. P-KN4. As I am supposed to be writing a book on the Dragon, I feel obliged to play the opening once in a while. Apparently there is a rumour that I am an authority on the subject. Unfortunately, it is some time since I played the system regularly, and I could remember nothing whatsoever about this line. **10 . . . R-B1; 11. Q-Q2, N-K4; 12. 0-0-0, N-B5; 13. B x N, R x B; 14. P-KR4, Q-B2; 15. P-R5, R-B1; 16. P x P, BP x P; 17. K-N1.** Here I disliked 17 . . . P-QN4 because of 18. N-Q5! when Black cannot defend his KR2 satisfactorily. So I produced a long queen manoeuvre to solve the problem. **17 . . . Q-R4; 18. N-N3, Q-K4; 19. B-Q4.** If 19. P-B4?! Q x NI? 20. P x Q, N x KP probably draws, but 19. . . . Q-K3 is a reasonable try for more. **19 . . . Q-K3; 20. Q-R2, Q-B2; 21. P-K5, P x P; 22. B x KP, B-K3; 23. N-Q4.** White stands better, so I decided to unbalance the position and give my opponent an interesting chance to go wrong. **23 . . . R x NI? 24. N x B? R x QBP; 25. Q x R, R x Q; 26. R-Q8ch, N-K1; 27. N x B, Q x P!** Now White has problems. After 28. R x Nch, K-B2; 29. K x R, Q x R; 30. B-B3, Q-K5ch; 31. K-N3, Q x P; White's pieces are hopelessly tied up. **28. R(1)-Q1.** If 28. R-K1, R-K7! 29. R x R, Q-B8ch!, or 28. R x Nch, K-B2; 29. R-K1, Q-Q6 (or R-K7); 30. K-R1, Q-K7! Now White hopes for 28 . . . Q-K5? 29. R x Nch, K-B2; 30. R-B8ch!! K x R; 31. N-K6ch, K-K1; 32. R-Q8ch and N-N5ch, but Black has better. **28. . . . R-B1!** Decisive. If 29. R x R, QxRch; 30. R-B1, Q-Q6ch; and N x N, or 29. N x N, Q-K5ch. **29. B-B3, R x B; 30. N x N, R-B1! 31. N-B6ch, K-B2; 32. N x P, R x R; 33. N-N5ch, K-B3; 34. N x Q, R x Rch; 35. K-B2, R-B8; 36. N-Q2, R-B7; White resigned.**

Problem 38

Black to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN post-marked not later than Wednesday 29 June.

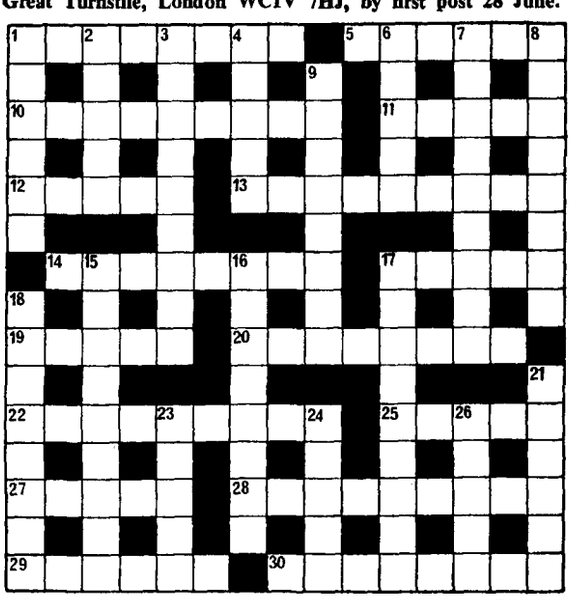


Solution to Problem 36

1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. N-N5! and if 2 . . .N x Q; 3. R x Nch, K-Q1; 4. R x Pch, or 2 . . .Q-Q2; 3. Q-B6ch, K-B1; 4. R x P, Q-N5; 5. Q x Nch! or 2 . . . R-KB1; 3. Q-K6ch, K-Q1; 4. N x Nch; N x N; 5. R x Pch.

Weekend Crossword 1220

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1220, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 28 June.



ACROSS

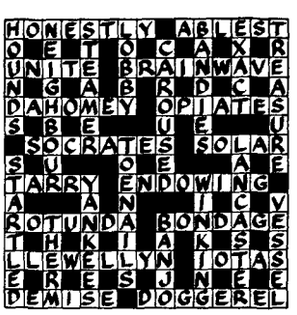
1. Agreements which are in the bag (8).
5. Areas for which speed is given in seconds (6).
10. I put in two small amounts for a woman (9).
11. Material essential to any lonely woman (5).
12. Going to French resort almost is invigorating (5).
13. The hostelry had nothing unusual inside to cause excitement (9).
14. Combining the posh with the sharp in a drink (8).
17. Book found among the annual bumper numbers (5).
19. Call to account at holding a rebellion (5).
20. About the best performance in print (2, 6).
22. Vote against when born to go without plaything (9).
25. One is in a seat or city (5).
27. Fabric which would go west if there were no place for the money (5).
28. One page is devoted to work for agents (9).
29. Abstract of gravity in changing tides (6).
30. Growing out of a hundred centres (8).

DOWN

1. The stars arrive with Eliot (6).
2. City back in our final impressions (5).
3. If you want a battle, woo after a drink (9).
4. His and her are concluded by an offspring (5).
6. The magazine for striking power (5).
7. Brighten up law? But this must be practised with discrimination (6, 3).
8. 'A project for extracting —— out of cucumbers' (Swift) (8).
9. 'An extravagant and wheeling ——' (*Othello*) (8).
15. Making new picture of bird without artist (9).
16. I act afterwards for an enthusiastic admirer (8).
17. Make sons trace forbears (9).
18. Hunted for a piece in a tangled beard (8).
21. Ability which is explosive without a drink (6).
23. Prey in mountains where there are no cats (5).
24. Look about quietly for an outcast (5).
26. Iron is about to strike something hot (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1218



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RESEARCH ASSISTANT

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BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

National Film Theatre–South Bank

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

This post in the Programme Planning Section, is responsible for all film movement in connection with the exhibition of films at the National Film Theatre. This requires researching and negotiating directly with overseas organisations, the availability of films from abroad and internal liaison regarding UK films.

It is essential that candidates are able to operate effectively under consistent pressure and a heavy work load. The ability to liase well with staff within the Institute is also an important requirement. A good standard of typing is necessary and French would be very advantageous.

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Other reviews by Philip French, Martin Amis, Michael Duane, Anthony Howard, Nicholas Bethell, James Fenton, Jeremy Treglown
828 **John Coleman:** Films
829 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre
830 **Ian Hamilton:** Television
830 **Eric Sams:** Opera
831 **Andrew Clements:** Music
831 **Hilary Spurling:** Cookery
832 **Weekend Competition**
833 **Chess and Crossword**
Poems by D. J. Enright, Robert Conquest, Geoffrey Grigson

Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. Summer season starts with 'Comedy of Errors' and 'Midsummer Night's Dream' in repertoire. See daily press for dates & times. RSC also at Piccadilly Theater in 'Wild Oats'.

CHICHESTER. 0243 86333. 17, 18, 20, 22 June at 7.0 'Waters of The Moon'. 18, 23 June at 2.0, 21 June at 7.0 'In Order of Appearance'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Ascent of Mount Fuji' by Chingiz Aimatov & Kaltal Mukhamedzhanov, directed by Michael Rudman. Nightly 8, Sats 5 & 8.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Madras House', The Nuria Espert Co in 'Divinas Palabras'. 'Old Movies' & 'Strawberry Fields'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Eves 8, Sats 5 & 8.30. Max Wall & John Thaw in 'Fair Slaughter' by Howard Barker.

ARTS THEATRE. 836 3334
'Worth queuing for from breakfast time' Financial Times.
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POLESDEN LACEY Open Air Theatre, Great Bookham, Surrey. 'As You Like It' 29, 30 June, 1 July at 7.30 p.m. Saturday 2 July at 3 & 7.30 p.m. 'Macbeth' 6, 7, 8 July at 7.30 p.m. Saturday 9 July at 3 & 7.30 p.m. Tickets £1.40, £1.10 & 85p. Bookham 52241 10 a.m.-7 p.m. (Sat. 1 p.m.).

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. 31 May-9 July 'The Norman Conquests' by Alan Ayckbourn, 14-25 June 'Living Together'.

TOWER THEATRE, N1. FOR JAMES JOYCE Sixth International Symposium, the Sugawn Theatre Club presents 'Shem's Progress; a Celebration of Finnegans Wake', Monday 20 June only, 7.30 p.m. Tel. 226 5111.

VAUDEVILLE
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LAST WEEK! Must end 25 June

Concert

AN ENJOYABLE EVENING of Chamber Music, Purcell Room (RFH). Sun. 19 June 7 p.m. The Emperor Ensemble of London, Christopher Taylor (flute), Joan Whiting (oboe), Thomas Kelly (clarinet), Wendy Phillips (bassoon), Terence Johns (horn), Naomi Davidov (piano). Works by Vivaldi, Beethoven, Poulenc, Hindemith, Villa-Lobos. Tickets £1.60, £1.35, £1.00 from RFH. 01-928 3191.

Exhibition

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. Original prints by Moore, Boyd, Lowry, 18 & 19c prints by Daumier, Gavarni, Manet, Toulouse Lautrec.

Entertainments

STRANGERS DON'T DRINK COFFEE
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21, 22, 23 JUNE at 7.30 p.m.
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2. NOMAD AND CITY
3. MAN AND NATURE
Thursday June 30 at 7.30 p.m.
4. THE PATTERN OF BEAUTY
5. KNOWLEDGE
6. THE INNER LIFE
Admission: £1.00 each night at the door or in advance from the Festival Trust
Tel: 370 6004

Meetings

AUBERON WAUGH LECTURE at Sutton Library, regrettably cancelled owing to illness.

YOUNG FABIAN GROUP. Speaker: Roy Hattersley MP. Tues. 21 June 8 p.m. Committee Room. House of Commons.

PEOPLE'S JUBILEE at Alexandra Palace, Sun. 19 June, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Santiago Carrillo; Gordon McLennan; 7.84 and Banner Theatre; Tony Miles; Film; Folk; Children's Festivals; Aswad and Soft Machine. Tickets £2, OAP's £1, Children 50p from CPGB, 16 King Street, WC2.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled 'The Golden Horde: The Mongols in Eastern Europe' will be given by Professor Bertold Spuler (University of Hamburg) at University College London, Botany Theatre, Gower Street, London WC1 at 5 p.m. on 22 June 1977. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

THE FUTURE OF BROADCASTING: Seminar, Sat. 18 June. Chairman: Anthony Smith. Speakers: Marghanita Laski; Nicholas Garnham; Sir Geoffrey Cox; Phillip Whitehead; Peter Edmonds; Alan Sapper. 10.30-4.30. Tickets £1 from Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth St, SW1. 930 3077. All welcome.

READINGS from the Works of Jalalu'ddin Rumi by Richard Morant and John Stevens, with recorded musical interludes. Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1, at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, 16 June. Admission 50p. Free entry to Rumi Society Members.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 18 June 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 21 June 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 22 June 6.30 p.m. — Public Lecture 'The Heart of Buddhism' — Christmas Humphreys. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers: Sun. 19 June 8 p.m. 'Practical Theosophy'. Wed. 22 June 7.30 p.m. ULT Day Commemoration Meeting. S.a.e. free pamphlet, book list. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, W2.

Courses

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YOUNG FABIAN SCHOOL 8-10 July, Hurtwood Centre, Peaslake, Surrey. 'Can We Return to Full Employment?' Director Brian Sedgemore MP. Speakers include John Golding MP, Chris Brooks (YouthAid), Peter Tansley (MSC). Cost £9. Contact The Administrative Officer, 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1. 01-930 3077.

AFRICA CENTRE SUMMER COURSES. 1. Development Studies: Social, Economic, Political & Ecological Issues. Tutors from Third World Countries. 6.30-9 p.m. Mon.-Thurs. 4 July-8 Sept. 2. Intensive Arabic, Spoken & Modern Literary. Small Groups. 3 hours daily 4 July-9 Sept. Tutor Munir Ebaid. Details: 38 King St, London WC2. Tel. 836 1973.

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